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New York

President:	Sir Emyr Jones Parry	(United Kingdom)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Benin	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil	Mr. Moritán
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Trautwein
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Philippines	Mr. Baja
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Karev
	Spain	Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo
	United States of America	Mrs. Patterson

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2004/814)

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04-57709 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2004/814)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, El Salvador, Fiji, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Mali, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic and the United Republic of Tanzania in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Ms. Louise Arbour, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, Ms. Agathe Rwankuba, Legal Advisor to the Women's Network for the Protection of Human Rights and Peace, and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

It is so decided.

If I may, at this stage, welcome and salute the presence with us of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno, Ms. Arbour and Ms. Obaid to take their seats at the Council table.

I invite Ms. Rwankuba and Ms. Heyzer to take the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 22 October 2004 — this could only happen under these circumstances — from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, requesting that Ms. Elsie Bernadette Onubogu, Permanent Observer of the Commonwealth Secretariat at the United Nations, be invited to participate in the open debate of the Security Council, in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Ms. Onubogu to take a seat at the side of the Council chamber.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Carmen Moreno, Director of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

It is so decided.

I invite Ms. Moreno to take a seat at the side of the Council chamber.

The Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations. Members of the Council have before them document S/2004/814, containing the report of the Secretary-General entitled, "Women and peace and security".

I should like to draw the attention of the members to document S/2004/862, containing a letter from Jordan, South Africa, Sweden and the United Kingdom, transmitting the report of the Conference on Gender Justice in Post-conflict Situations.

At this morning's meeting, the Council will hear briefings by Mr. Guéhenno, Ms. Arbour and

Ms. Obaid, and this afternoon, by Ms. Rwankuba and Ms. Heyzer.

It is very good to see so many distinguished guests and speakers, a visible demonstration of the support of the United Nations system, as a whole, for Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). That resolution marked a turning point in the work of the Security Council. For the first time, the Council looked beyond the political and the military dimensions of peace and security and specifically addressed the rights of those most affected by conflict.

Crucially, the resolution not only recognized the disproportionate affect of conflict on women, but it also underlined the essential contribution that they make to prevent conflict and maintain peace. Resolution 1325 (2000) tasked the United Nations system and its Member States to ensure that gender considerations are thoroughly integrated into all aspects of United Nations peace and security work, from conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction.

In addition to the increased participation of women, resolution 1325 (2000) also addresses the very urgent need of providing protection to women in conflict situations because, as we all know, it is women and children who suffer disproportionately in armed conflict and constitute the majority of all victims.

There has been growing international recognition in recent years of gender-based violence in conflict situations. Incidents of such violence continue at a frightening rate. As we start this debate, I can do no better than note what the Secretary-General said in his wake-up address to the African Union when gender was discussed in Addis Ababa on 6 July this year. Mr. Kofi Annan said on that occasion,

> "In parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the Darfur region of the Sudan, gender-based violence has reached almost epidemic proportions. Every effort must be made to halt this odious practice and bring the perpetrators to justice."

Who can quarrel with those words? I hope this meeting provides a clear demonstration of the collective resolve to actually confront the realities of this issue.

I give the floor to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno.

Mr. Guéhenno: Four years ago, the Security Council adopted its landmark resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security. Since then, there has been a tangible and positive shift in international understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls. There has also been growing recognition that peace and security cannot be built through the exclusion of more than half of a country's or the world's population. Women and girls have an essential role to play in rebuilding war-shattered societies, not through token representation but as full-fledged and rightful participants in the process.

My distinguished and respected colleagues scheduled to speak throughout the day will elucidate, from various expert perspectives, the magnitude of the challenge that has been overcome and that yet also remains to be tackled in the implementation of this historic resolution. For my part, I am honoured to introduce the Secretary-General's report (S/2004/814), to which 25 countries contributed information, and to highlight for the Council the range of issues that it addresses.

I will begin with the good news, and I hope the Council will not mind if I turn to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and peacekeeping first. I am sincerely proud that in his report the Secretary-General highlights that it is in this sector where much of the most significant progress in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) has been achieved.

For example, full-time gender advisers are now deployed and are playing a prominent role in 10 of the 17 United Nations peacekeeping operations. In 2000, there were only two gender advisers in total. Gender policies and training for peacekeeping personnel are now standard features of our daily discussions, whereas in 2000 they were considered novel innovations. Furthermore, this year DPKO adopted a policy on human trafficking and produced a package of anti-trafficking guidance for peacekeeping operations.

Humanitarian and development agencies have much to be proud of as well, as the report illustrates. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance has developed strategies to facilitate gender mainstreaming in all humanitarian activities. Individual departments and agencies such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have developed a

gender mainstreaming policy and action plan. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has made five commitments to refugee women.

The report points to ongoing technical assistance activities provided to several countries under the coordination of the Division for the Advancement of Women. It recognizes the initiative of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to advocate a stronger system-wide approach to addressing gender justice issues in post-conflict situations. The report also illustrates the ongoing efforts by the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to advance the participation of women in electoral processes.

The report describes the development of gender-sensitive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes in a number of post-conflict countries, although it acknowledges that those are initial steps which need to be further elaborated. Agencies such as UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme are among those most actively engaged in those efforts. DPKO and UNIFEM are working in partnership to develop standard operating procedures on gender and DDR, and the Department for Disarmament Affairs has designed a gender mainstreaming action plan.

All of these different parts of the United Nations system are not working in isolation. The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Task Force on Women, Peace and Security have played an important role in advocating and supporting a coordinated approach to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Mine Action Service has played an important coordinating role in its area of expertise.

Likewise, as the High Commissioner for Human Rights knows best, there has been growing cooperation among all international human rights actors on the implementation of the resolution. The Secretary-General's report covers how human rights observers from the United Nations system, regional organizations such as the African Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, non-governmental organizations and civil society are forging critical alliances to ensure better monitoring, reporting and investigation of violations of the human rights of women.

I have mentioned just a sample of examples of how much has been accomplished to implement resolution 1325 (2000), but the report equally calls attention to how much is left to be done.

In the humanitarian arena, the Secretary-General's report emphasizes that there is indeed ample scope for even more effective coordination among United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations and refugee and displaced women's groups and for more funding for women-specific programmes.

The report calls for greater understanding of how truth and reconciliation processes have met the needs of women, calling for a review of the extent to which they have participated in them to date.

The findings of the report show that women's knowledge and experiences are underutilized in the prevention of violent conflict, while gender perspectives have been neglected in early warning exercises and the development of response options.

The report further calls attention to the fact that peace processes and negotiations remain overwhelmingly male-dominated arenas where women's contributions largely remain outside the formal processes. The report recommends a review of recent peace processes that analyses the obstacles and opportunities for full participation by women.

The report acknowledges the wide scope that exists for building gender-sensitive approaches to reporting, highlighting that a gender analysis of 264 reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council from January 2000 to September 2003 revealed that only 17.8 per cent made multiple references to women and gender concerns, while 67 per cent of the reports made no or only one mention of women or gender issues.

The report also addresses the issue of gender recruitment. The number of female uniformed personnel in our peacekeeping operations is still far too low. As of June 2004, women constituted only 1 per cent of military personnel and 5 per cent of civilian police personnel assigned by Member States to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations. As concerns international civilians in all United Nations peace

support operations, the percentage of women increased from 24 per cent in 2002 to only 27.5 per cent in 2004.

At the highest level of decision-making in peace support operations, there are only two female Special Representatives of the Secretary-General out of a total of 27. To address that gap, the report proposes a two-pronged approach that emphasizes both the need to increase the participation of women in senior positions and the need for all senior staff to demonstrate commitment to the promotion of gender equality.

The report also stresses that there is still a lot that can be done to strengthen our collective ability to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. Member States and United Nations entities — notably OCHA, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund, UNHCR, UNIFEM and the World Health Organization, as well as international and national non-governmental organizations, are conducting training, producing guidelines and delivering medical supplies for treating the consequences of gender-based violence. The report notes those concrete actions, but appeals for even greater efforts in that area.

To attain sustainable results, gender-based violence — whether manifested in the form of mass rape, the sexual exploitation of women and girls, domestic violence or trafficking — must not be treated in isolation. We must recognize those crimes as part of a broader and endemic assault on the rights of women and girls in conflict. A commitment to preventing and responding to gender-based violence must serve as a critical priority in any framework for post-conflict peace-building. That approach is still lacking in our collective efforts.

This is also a collective responsibility. We cannot expect to effectively address the problem of gender-based violence if the burden of responsibility for doing so rests with women alone. That problem is one that plagues families, communities, nations and the global community as a whole, and as such requires the engagement of men and women as partners, working hand in hand to end the scourge.

Finally, the report focuses particular attention on one form of gender-based violence: sexual abuse and exploitation by humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel. The report notes that, this year, approximately 70 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were made against United Nations peacekeeping personnel in Bunia alone in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Those allegations have been investigated by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services and we await the final conclusions.

To stop those abhorrent acts, the United Nations system needs to work hand in hand with Member States. In the report before the Council, the Secretary-General reiterates his full commitment to the full implementation of the special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, as set forth in his bulletin. He urges Member States, intergovernmental and regional organizations, and international and national aid and civil society organizations to apply the same standards to peacekeeping personnel, including military and civilian police.

The report notes the efforts DPKO is undertaking — working within the framework of the United Nations system-wide Task Force on that issue — to help Member States and its personnel address that problem. Disciplinary directives for civilian, military and civilian police personnel have been compiled. Training materials on the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation have been designed and focal points on that issue have been created in several peacekeeping missions.

The issue is being taken seriously in the Department, but it must and will be given even greater priority in the coming year. Our work cannot be considered complete on that front for as long as sexual exploitation or abuse is being committed by a single peacekeeper or humanitarian worker. Even one incident is simply unacceptable.

To conclude, the report of the Secretary-General now before the Council illustrates the progress achieved to date in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The status of implementation presented in the report is a faithful reflection of the fruits of our collective efforts at the national, non-governmental and intergovernmental level, but it is also an unequivocal call to action on several crucial fronts. It is a call that is to be heeded in the interests of the millions of women and girls in war-shattered societies who are victimized by conflict, but who also hold the key to building sustainable peace in their countries, as they themselves know best.

The President: I now call on the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Louise Arbour.

Mrs. Arbour: A few weeks ago, I briefed the Council on the situation in Darfur. On that occasion, I drew members' attention to the plight of women and to the many atrocities that they have suffered with very little immediate hope of bringing the perpetrators to justice. The very purpose of resolution 1325 (2000) is to address the needs of women and girls in crises such as that in Darfur. While progress has been made in implementing that resolution, Darfur is not the only conflict today where women continue to be subject to grave human rights violations, to be excluded from reconstruction efforts and to be refused access to justice. Therefore, I welcome the Security Council's willingness to engage in the promotion and protection of women's rights in conflict situations.

Women do not seek a special kind of justice. However, historically, they have been and continue to be on the receiving end of a special kind of oppression and abuse. That is particularly so in times of conflict, when the rule of force obliterates the rule of law.

Conflict exacerbates gender-based violence and the likelihood of impunity that perpetrators commonly enjoy. Over the last 20 years, there has been increased international recognition of the seriousness of gender-based violence and a growing international commitment to ensuring accountability and redress. Following the systematic sexual violence associated with the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, precise legal standards were developed through the jurisprudence of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to confirm that such practices may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide. Those standards are now reflected in the Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The violations women experience will never be dealt with appropriately until justice issues receive sufficient attention both nationally and internationally. For too long, consultation with women has been inadequate. Stereotypes and prejudices have unfairly stigmatized women victims. The international community and national Governments must more effectively address impunity and the reconstruction of justice systems. The pressure for political agreement to resolve a conflict too often leads to a reluctance to bring perpetrators to justice. The reconstruction of effective justice systems rarely receives the financial support that goes to delivering humanitarian assistance or even to rebuilding physical and economic infrastructure. Support for the establishment of any justice system should involve women and should include gender-sensitive procedures.

Women are invariably excluded from formal decision-making processes and peace negotiations, and yet their vision and contribution must be sustained since, without their full participation, efforts to reconstruct war-torn societies will be fundamentally flawed.

In that context, we are now confronted with an invidious practice the scale of which has yet to be fully acknowledged and effectively addressed. Human trafficking makes women in situations of conflict, displaced and refugee women and asylum seekers particularly vulnerable. Life-threatening situations in the wake of conflict, including in refugee camps where protection is not always guaranteed, drive women and girls to seek alternatives for survival where they risk falling into the hands of traffickers who promise safe environments and job opportunities. It is therefore vital to develop and to implement anti-trafficking strategies that place the rights of the victims at their centre.

Above all, there can be no tolerance for the sexual exploitation of vulnerable populations by those entrusted with their safety, whether peacekeepers, humanitarian personnel or other international staff. The Secretary-General has already set out the responsibility of senior managers and of every staff member of the United Nations to ensure that the presence of international organizations does not allow, encourage or lead to involvement in such human rights violations. Sexual predatory practice by international interveners cannot just be condemned as the isolated, deplorable actions of a few bad apples. The sexual exploitation of vulnerable women and children is a crime compounded by the gross abuse of power involved in its perpetration, and for which we must collectively take responsibility.

The initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General in that regard will go a long way to bringing clarity to the duties and obligations of all those involved in field operations on behalf of the United Nations. His efforts will no doubt ensure greater accountability. In addition, I urge the Council to engage actively on this issue with troop-contributing countries, insisting that undertakings be given that impunity will not be tolerated.

On the fourth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), I call upon the Council to provide explicitly, wherever relevant, for compliance with all aspects of resolution 1325 (2000). That should emphasize, in particular, the obligations to protect women and girls during conflict; to ensure the equal participation of women in peace negotiations, as well as in conflict prevention; to ensure access to justice for women; and to integrate a gender perspective into all peacekeeping and humanitarian activities.

I urge the Council to combat impunity for gender-based violence by advocating training for security forces and law enforcement agencies in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights law, and in particular in accordance with women's rights.

I also urge the Council to ensure that all future mechanisms for transitional justice created by the Council build on existing norms and standards and that they include judges and advisers with legal expertise on women's rights, ensure that prosecutors respect the interests and personal circumstances of women and girls who are victims and witnesses and take into account the special nature of gender-based crimes.

Finally, I would urge the Security Council to use all its influence to generate the political will, as well as the financial support, to protect women's rights and to ensure women's access to justice, including through the rebuilding of a justice sector that is responsive to their needs.

The women and young girls in the camps in Darfur are putting themselves at considerable risk to collect firewood, which not only provides them with cooking fuel but also allows trading opportunities upon which they can build a modest sense of autonomy and empowerment. In my view, their efforts will contribute to the reconstruction of their devastated country in no smaller measure than the attempts being made by the men engaged in the political negotiations in Naivasha and Abuja. I think that they should be supported accordingly.

The President: I would now like to call on Ms. Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund.

Ms. Obaid: I shall be reading out a short statement; copies of a longer text will be distributed.

We are here today to speak about the unspeakable: the gender-based and sexual violence that is occurring on a massive scale in conflict and post-conflict situations around the world. Study after study shows that the effects of sexual violence linger long after the event and continue to fester like an open wound. The injuries and medical and psychological consequences of such violence — such as fistulas, depression, post-traumatic stress syndrome, becoming infected with sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS or becoming pregnant as the result of rape — are generally ignored by authorities or considered as marginal concerns.

But to the millions of women who are affected by sexual violence, those concerns are far from marginal. They cut to the core of their very existence. An effective response to that violence is absolutely central to their lives and futures, and also to the future of their shattered families, communities and nations. That has been made painfully clear to us in the United Nations Population Fund as we strive to promote reproductive health and rights among conflict-affected populations. It is truly sad and terribly angering to see the tremendous needs that exist, but it is even more shocking to witness the response so far, which remains completely inadequate, even meagre.

While we, the agencies of the United Nations system, have made progress during the past four years in devising standards, protocols and guidelines, including gender considerations in humanitarian and security policies and putting gender specialists in place, we have not made similar progress on the ground. The fact that we are discussing this issue in the Security Council today reflects the recognition that greater progress must be made. I thank Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, in his capacity as President of the Council, for opening this important debate and for inviting us to participate.

It is time to establish systems of accountability within Member States and within the United Nations on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). There are several concrete actions that must be taken immediately to respond to the victims of gender-based violence.

First, increased political will is needed to ensure that women and girls receive real protection from sexual violence and abuse in their homes and

communities, in camps for refugees and internally displaced persons and in disarmament and demobilization cantonment areas.

Secondly, we must take steps together to ensure that incidents of sexual violence are recorded, that evidence is gathered and preserved and that the perpetrators of gender-based violence are brought to justice.

Thirdly, we must ensure that police, security, peacekeeping and humanitarian personnel and officials are trained to recognize, and respond to, gender-based violence. We do not need a few women here and there; we need gender parity so that women in positions of power can stop abuses of power.

Fourthly, we must provide effective training programmes for health personnel on how to care for victims of sexual violence, and we must ensure that local organizations and women's groups are actively involved each step of the way.

Fifthly, it is urgent that survivors of sexual violence receive quality legal, psychological and reproductive health services to address the horrifying violence they have endured.

Lastly, we must take action to implement programmes aimed at public and community leaders on the importance of not stigmatizing victims of sexual violence and take action to empower women and girls to enable them to seek help and adequate support. That is in line with the recommendation contained in the Secretary-General's report to the Council (S/2004/814). It is also in line with the Programme of Action adopted in Cairo 10 years ago at the International Conference on Population and Development. It was there that 179 world leaders urged countries to identify and condemn the systematic practice of rape and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment of women as a deliberate instrument of war and ethnic cleansing, and to take steps to ensure that full assistance is provided to the victims of such abuse for their physical and mental rehabilitation.

One of the most devastating consequences of sexual violence is the transmission of HIV/AIDS. In Rwanda two thirds of the women who were raped during the 1994 genocide were infected with HIV, and they are dying slow, painful deaths. HIV and AIDS threaten stability and prospects for security, damaging social systems that become overwhelmed and undermining public confidence in the future, resulting in hot spots of vulnerability and economic and social decline.

Significant progress has been made in the past few years by working closely with peacekeeping missions and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to prevent gender-based violence and HIV. But much more needs to be done. As speakers before me have stressed, this massive and systematic violation of human rights will continue so long as perpetrators remain free and have no fear of paying the consequences for the crimes they have committed.

Most important of all, all of these measures require immediate and sustained funding so that they constitute a routine and systematic response. I stress that point because most proposals to address gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations continue to go unfunded, and women are paying the price. If we do not address the issue of gender-based violence in an effective manner, our failures in the critical areas of security and humanitarian protection will only increase in the years to come.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached previously, I would like to invite all future speakers to try to limit their statements to five minutes, in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I know it is asking a lot, but we have a very formidable list of potential contributors, and the debate will go on for a long time. If speakers would please be as concise as possible, I am sure everyone will be appreciative. For anyone who has a lengthy intervention, may I suggest that you please circulate it and make a slightly shorter oral intervention, which would, I think, be very helpful.

Mrs. Patterson (United States): Mr. President, we would like to congratulate you on the selection of this topic for your presidency's thematic discussion, and we would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his typically candid and clear report, as well as express our appreciation for the reports and comments of Louise Arbour, High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

This is a very difficult issue. The United States agrees that the United Nations must strengthen its response to gender-based violence and conflict in post-conflict situations. The United States delegation would like to focus its comments today on one element of the problem, namely, trafficking in persons.

This problem is often worsened by the upheaval accompanying post-conflict situations, as Ms. Arbour said. Regrettably, it has also been associated with the presence of peacekeeping operations.

As you are aware, trafficking in persons is an issue that continues to grow, sometimes in the same places that we are charged, as members of the Security Council, to protect. Annually, between 600,000 and 800,000 men, women and children are involved in such cross-border traffic. These individuals are recruited, transported or sold into all forms of forced labour and servitude, including prostitution, labour, farming and child armies. The victims range from a 12-year-old girl in the Congo, forced to have sex with more than a dozen foreigners a day, to child soldiers in the African continent to a smuggled Mexican worker toiling in a Florida tomato field to pay off a hugely inflated debt that never declines. Of these victims, 80 per cent are female. Seventy per cent of these girls and women are trafficked into the commercial sex industry.

The United States is deeply committed to ending this scourge of trafficking in persons, which poses a security threat by lining the pockets of criminal groups, while grossly violating people's human rights and serving as a public health threat through the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. This problem also hampers troop readiness. This is an issue that is receiving increasing attention from the international community and from the United States. Last September, President Bush called on the international community to create clear standards and certainty of punishment for the crime of trafficking.

Since the year 2000, the United States has given almost $300 million to support anti-trafficking in persons programmes in more than 120 countries. In the past year alone, 24 nations enacted new laws to combat trafficking in persons, while 32 other countries are currently drafting or passing such laws. As a result of these efforts, nearly 8,000 traffickers have been prosecuted worldwide, and 2,800 have been convicted.

While these gains are admirable, I am sorry to say that they fall short of redressing the problem. We need a concerted effort on the part of all Member States to end this plague. Not surprisingly, United Nations peacekeeping missions mirror attitudes and problems found in the armed forces of the Member States.

As Security Council members, we should continue to support the efforts of the United Nations leadership to effect change within the United Nations missions. Trafficking in persons violations within United Nations missions need continued high-level attention. In July 2004, Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and the Secretary-General officially approved an anti-trafficking policy for peacekeepers. This policy supplements a bulletin issued by the Secretary-General in October 2003, which also established guidelines of acceptable conduct by United Nations peacekeepers. This bulletin prohibits acts of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse by United Nations staff or United Nations forces conducting operations under United Nations command, including the exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex and sexual activity with persons under age 18.

However, policy is only as good as its enforcement. We welcome Mr. Guéhenno's statement that the United Nations will enforce a policy of zero tolerance of sex trafficking at every United Nations mission. We must also enforce the same zero tolerance policy with respect to prostitution, as this fuels the demand for human trafficking victims by serving as a cover under which traffickers operate. We also seek to put in place trafficking-in-persons training for all United Nations peacekeepers, which would be mandatory prior to their deployment.

The United States commends the work of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Best Practices Unit to this end. In July of this year, the Department of State provided $200,000 in funding to support the Best Practices Unit for the production of anti-trafficking awareness materials. The Unit will produce over 60,000 posters, brochures and pocket cards, translated into 10 peacekeeping languages, for distribution to all missions, regional training centres and to the pre-deployment training centres of the main troop-contributing countries. However, having one staff member dedicated to addressing the issues of trafficking in persons among all United Nations peacekeepers is not enough, especially when that one position will expire in the next two months. And, while these efforts are useful in raising awareness, they will

be meaningless unless peacekeepers receive mandatory training that clearly outlines the zero tolerance policy of the United Nations and they receive proper punishment to fit the crime. Most importantly, we need a dedicated United Nations leadership position to carry out these goals.

By definition, post-conflict societies are those that suffer from the weak rule of law. United Nations peacekeeping missions need to be at the forefront of ensuring that gender-based violence is eliminated or redressed. We can do this by creating concrete steps and actions to ensure compliance.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) *(spoke in Spanish)*: I welcome the opportunity of having this debate on women, peace and security and I congratulate you for the outstanding job you are doing as President of the Security Council. I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General and his commitment, as we are fully aware, to the rights of women.

Similarly, we would like to highlight the valuable comments we have heard from Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Louise Arbour and Thoraya Ahmed Obaid.

We also fully endorse the statement that will be made by the Permanent Representative of Canada on behalf of the members of the Human Security Network.

During the four years since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), positive changes have occurred in the international community's understanding of the effects that conflict has on peace and security, particularly as concerns women and girl children. Increasingly, women in our various countries have achieved greater equality and participate more in areas related to peace and security.

In this connection, the observations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (document S/2004/814), dated 13 October 2004, are valuable. Also of value are the specific actions taken by Member States, United Nations agencies and civil society to implement this important resolution, particularly by providing more training and by promoting consultation, participation and support to initiatives taken by women's groups, as well as through improved knowledge in the area of gender issues. Nonetheless, as has been said here, much remains to be done.

It is essential that there be full-fledged participation of women in all stages of a conflict situation, from prevention to reconstruction. We agree with the report of the Secretary-General that there are still gaps, particularly as regards integrating gender perspectives into peace agreements and giving appropriate attention to the needs of women in humanitarian and reconstruction processes. Women must also be represented in positions of responsibility.

We share the concern that one of the greatest difficulties in recent years is the increase in sexual violence. Accordingly, the recommendations put forward by the Secretary-General enjoy our support, in that greater pressure must be exerted on the parties to the conflict to prevent and control these types of despicable acts.

Similarly, we support his recommendations with regard to putting an end to impunity for related crimes and the need to ensure that courts and human rights monitors have the requisite experience with regard to gender issues.

Chile has always been strongly committed to supporting initiatives aimed at the implementation of this resolution, including the development of government policies at the domestic level, as well as supporting civil society. This has been shown by our Mission's participation in various Arrias-formula meetings, but, most importantly, by our participation in two round-tables last January and July, organized by the Permanent Missions of Canada, the United Kingdom and Chile, in cooperation with the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. As a result of such meetings, an interesting report was prepared containing useful ideas that should be considered in the drafting of Security Council resolutions.

We would like also to emphasize the efforts made by civil society to take innovative steps towards the implementation of this resolution, particularly those of the networks of women's organizations that are working in the field.

Let me recall that in 2002 my country hosted a regional seminar on the role of women in peacekeeping operations. A number of proposals were put forward at that meeting, including developing regional approaches to identify strategies for the implementation of the resolution; supporting the work of high-level gender advisers in all missions; and establishing mechanisms to ensure systematic coordination between the Security Council and civil society.

In conclusion, we would like to say that the time has come to bridge the gap between theory, as contained in resolutions, and reality. A great deal of information is available on the problems facing women and girl children in the field and on their strengths and weaknesses. We have committed ourselves to taking a series of steps and succeeded in creating a solid international legal framework. However, in practice we have not known how, or been able, fully to implement all these measures. We believe that one way of ensuring the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) would be to devise, and continue to develop, effective monitoring systems that would make it possible more systematically to monitor such implementation.

Finally, let me say that, despite the progress that has been achieved, we have to continue our work towards that end. We believe that only the full participation of women can create greater opportunities to achieve world peace.

The President: Let me say a special thank you to the representative of Benin for his chairmanship of the Arria-style meeting, which actually helped to prepare this Council discussion.

Mr. Adechi (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Four years ago the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000), thereby setting the goal of establishing a benchmark for the international community that would guide the actions of States, international institutions and civil society in addressing gender-related problems in the context of efforts to promote peace and security.

The Secretary-General's assessment of the implementation of the resolution clearly reflects the progress that has been made, but also points to the gaps that still have to be bridged. Overall, we were pleased to see that there has been a mindset change as concerns the particular situation of women and also concerted action at all levels to give women their rightful place in our societies.

We welcome the joint efforts of States, the United Nations system and civil society organizations, particularly women's groups, which have helped increase awareness of the particular needs of women in conflict situations.

The report, however, also notes the regrettable persistence of gender-based violence and of trafficking in human beings, with women and girl children as the primary victims, particularly in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. Mr. President, we welcome your country's decision to convene a public debate on the strengthening of the response of the United Nations to violence against women in conflict situations. We take this opportunity to express our full and strong condemnation of that phenomenon.

At an Arria-style meeting on 21 October, the Security Council heard heart-rending accounts that truly brought home these harsh realities and the extent to which such criminal practices harm humanity as a whole, as they represent a serious affront to human dignity, particularly when they are used on a large scale as a weapon of war in certain conflicts. That is often the case in internal conflicts, which are real tragedies that are played out behind closed doors, out of the spotlight of the international media.

The increase in the number of such conflicts in recent decades has created a fertile breeding ground for gender-based exploitation and violence. The combat against gender-based violence must fully be internalized by the international community in its efforts to settle internal armed conflicts. It is necessary also to criminalize gender-based violence in order combat impunity. That means that, at the national judicial level, rules and norms must be introduced for the prosecution of such cases.

The efforts of the United Nations must help to ensure the documentation of cases of gender-based violence and of other human rights violations, as well as strengthen the capacity of civil society, particularly women's organizations, to tackle that scourge. It must help to provide protection to witnesses and ensure that justice is done and redress made to victims, as well as identify perpetrators of gender-based violence and bring them to trial at the national level or at the level of the International Criminal Court. Finally, it must bring increased pressure to bear on parties to a conflict to put an end to such human rights violations.

In the framework of conflict prevention, we must devote particular attention to the provision of information to women and girls about what recourse is available to them in the area of gender-based violence. The participation of women in the decision-making process at various levels is necessary in order to ensure that gender issues are dealt with comprehensively.

The United Nations must seeks ways and means of better integrating the implementation of resolution

1325 (2000) into its multifaceted activities aimed at the protection of the human person. All United Nations structures must therefore adopt coherent strategies to combat the scourge of gender-based violence in their activities in countries in conflict or post-conflict situations. The question of leadership in the coordination of such activities seems to us pressing and vital. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which is dealing with this issue, must therefore be provided the necessary resources.

Finally, we believe that at the current stage, peacekeeping operations, through their composition and their mandates, can be a useful tool and a determining factor in the implementation of such measures.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this important meeting on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). We are also grateful for the three excellent briefings that were given this morning.

Reports and discussions on this question show that there are a number of consensus points insofar as the item "Women and peace and security" is concerned which need to be recognized and elaborated.

First, women play an important role in building sustainable peace and security. Secondly, there is a need to ensure the full participation of women and the incorporation of a gender perspective in all conflict-prevention and peace-building missions. Thirdly, women indeed have a vital role in reconstruction processes. Fourthly, there is a need to address urgently gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict. And fifthly, civil society contributes significantly to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) means a lot of things to a lot of people, especially women. It has been hailed as a landmark resolution because of the breadth of issues it addresses and the depth of the political and operational challenges to its implementation. Thus the first question and challenge is to find out whether the expectations of women, which have risen since 2002, have been met, partially met, or, in some cases, not met at all. We had a very comprehensive presentation on that aspect of the issue from Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno this morning.

Whatever the assessment may be, our delegation believes that the strategy for further implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) must take several factors into consideration.

First, to strengthen the United Nations response to gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations — the particular theme of our discussion today — a comprehensive system-wide strategy and action plan for gender mainstreaming in the Organization's work is necessary. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's intentions towards that end, particularly the strategy to mainstream a gender perspective in all peacekeeping activities and operations and to interface that strategy with the policies and plans adopted by the General Assembly — especially the commitments concerning women and armed conflict that were adopted at the Assembly's twenty-third special session — as well as with those of the Economic and Social Council related to mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, including in political decision-making and conflict prevention and resolution. We also endorse the recommendations of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund on how to eliminate gender violence as they relate to particular situations of armed conflict.

Secondly, there should be a conscious effort made to ensure that gender sensitivity at the Headquarters level is translated into gender sensitivity in the field. I have been informed that only 15.6 per cent of Security Council resolutions adopted between January 2000 and June 2004 have been gender sensitive. It might be even more disappointing to find out exactly how much of the substance of those resolutions has actually been implemented on the ground. Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno cited some sobering statistics on that subject this morning. It will therefore be essential to put in place a system of monitoring and reporting on the progress of United Nations implementation of gender concerns in the field.

The Philippine Government's strategies to implement resolution 1325 (2000) are mainly carried out in the context of the peace processes in the southern region of our country. There, women have been involved in dialogues and workshops that integrate their perspectives in settling hostilities in their communities. As an example, two of the major initiatives being undertaken to promote peace in the southern region of Mindanao are the Muslim Women's

Peace Conference and the Women and a Culture of Peace Programme. The Mindanao Commission on Women has just conducted consultations to formulate a Mindanao women's position paper on a peace agreement between the Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front peace agreement, which will be taken into account in peace talks. The Government's peace panels also include women negotiators. Our National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process are in constant coordination on how to enhance strategies to enable more women to systematically participate in conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as in the rehabilitation of their communities. In addition, we recently activated our Inter-Agency Committee against Traffic in Persons, in implementation of the Philippine Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003.

At the regional level, in June 2004 the Philippines, together with its neighbours, signed a Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women in the ASEAN Region. The Declaration emphasized that gender-based violence is an obstacle to peace and development in the region.

Still looking at this second area, we are interested to know whether there is an inventory of existing United Nations resources available for implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Implementation depends on Member States' action plans, the effectiveness of which, in turn, depends on their capacity to implement them. There is, therefore, a need to ensure that sufficient information on available resources flows to Member States to enable national action plans to be translated into action in the field.

Thirdly, the United Nations may not be able to bear the full responsibility of implementing resolution 1325 (2000). Governments have the primary responsibility for keeping peace in their territories. The United Nations, therefore, must use its unique and important position to enable Governments to make full use of resolution 1325 (2000) in leading the peace efforts in their countries. One of the sad realities is that while Governments may be willing to use the resolution as a tool for peace, because of poverty, lack of good governance and other reasons, they may not have the necessary capacity and means to make effective use of it.

The United Nations could be the fulcrum to rally the support of the international community, civil society and international organizations to cooperate with Governments in increasing the focus on gender concerns. International cooperation needs to be enhanced in order to increase the success of resolution 1325 (2000) in every conflict area. Effective coordination and partnerships with members of civil society and non-governmental groups, especially those present at the sites of conflict, will be a crucial factor in the resolution's success. In most instances, members of those groups interact with affected communities and are able to reach out directly to people, especially women. Coordination among civil society groups will therefore ensure a greater impact of assistance on the ground.

We believe that Member States and the United Nations system should establish systematic coordination with civil society groups and together implement innovative approaches and best practices in resolving conflicts and focusing attention on the gender dimensions of all peace efforts.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain welcomes the initiative taken by the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council to hold this open debate, four years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. We would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2004/814), which describes progress in implementation of the resolution and highlights areas where greater effort is still needed to attain its full implementation.

Spain supports the statement that will be made by the representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union.

In the four years that have elapsed since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), there have certainly been positive changes in that there is better understanding of the serious and disproportionate effects of armed conflict on women and girls. During that time there has also been wider understanding of the importance of women's participation on an equal footing in preventing and managing conflicts, as well as in peace negotiations, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction, rehabilitation and post-conflict peace-building. Nevertheless, we are all aware that much still remains to be done to ensure

the full and effective implementation of this important resolution, as can clearly be seen from the report of the Secretary-General as well as from the excellent and knowledgeable statements that we heard at the beginning of this meeting.

Here, I should like to focus on the issue of gender-based violence in armed conflict. Addressing that question at the international level has received greater momentum over recent years as a result of the work of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda established by the Security Council, as well as through the inclusion of such criminal conduct within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, in accordance with its Rome Statute.

Still, the facts on the ground demonstrate that, frequently, international humanitarian law and human rights are openly ignored by the parties to conflicts and that women and girls continue to be the object of sexual violence and of other particularly serious violations of their human rights. In our opinion, we must immediately envisage the adoption of additional measures in the following areas.

First, it is necessary to improve gender training for all military, police and civilian personnel participating in peacekeeping operations, with a view to making assistance to victims of conflict more effective and above all to avoid the emergence of cases, such as those we heard about today, in which members of such missions are involved in acts against the safety or dignity of women or girls in areas of conflict. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on this issue, and we hope that the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries will strictly implement it.

Secondly, we must step up efforts to include a gender perspective in transitional institutions that are charged with post-conflict national reconciliation. Such institutions must have staff who are specially trained in dealing with gender-based violence and other crimes to which women and girls could be subjected during conflicts, in order to put an end to impunity for such crimes.

Thirdly, we must improve the care, emergency services and support so that women who are victims of sexual violence in conflicts can recover in every respect. Here, we must launch campaigns to inform victims of their rights and of opportunities for assistance, thus facilitating their access to the appropriate institutions.

Fourthly, there must be greater coordination on the part of all organs and agencies in the United Nations system and there must be mechanisms to assess and follow up on situations in the field and to monitor the quality of assistance given to the victims. This is not so much a question of forging new mechanisms, but rather of improving the coordination and enhancing the efficiency of existing mechanisms by implementing a concrete plan of action.

Fifthly, we must improve the quantity and quality of information we receive, so that the international community's response can be more cohesively and effectively coordinated. United Nations teams in the field, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations must help to publicize the true scope of this tragedy.

As the Secretary-General rightly notes, resolution 1325 (2000) holds out a promise to women across the globe that their rights will be protected and that barriers to their full and equal participation in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace will be removed. Four years have elapsed since the adoption of that resolution, and we still cannot say that it has been fully implemented in all areas. We must pledge that within a reasonable time period, this promise will become a reality; that is the primary responsibility of the Council. We therefore believe that the Security Council should seriously consider establishing a permanent mechanism for following up on compliance with resolution 1325 (2000) in the context of the various situations continuously under the Council's consideration.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I would like to thank you for taking the initiative of organizing this discussion on women and peace and security shortly before the fourth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

The adoption of that resolution was a particularly welcome recognition of the special situation of women in armed conflicts, in which they are targeted for the most abominable kinds of violence, and in which rape and other sexual violence are often used as a weapon to punish, intimidate, degrade and demoralize the opposing camp. Women are reduced to sexual slavery or fall victim to the human trafficking organized with impunity by organized crime networks taking

advantage of the chaos of war. Women suffer from all kinds of discrimination in times of peace, but their situation worsens and they become even more vulnerable in times of conflict and in post-conflict periods.

The resolution pays tribute to the role women play in conflict prevention, peace-building and national reconstruction. In adopting the resolution, the Council paid tribute to their courage and to their commitment to peace. Women have a remarkable capacity to move beyond cultural, religious and other kinds of divisions for the sake of peace-building and national reconciliation. They have made themselves indispensable as partners for peace in Africa and elsewhere. We have seen this in the work of the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network and in the role played by women of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in connection with the success of the inter-Congolese dialogue at Sun City.

The most important achievement of resolution 1325 (2000) is undoubtedly that women and girls and their needs are now the main focus of United Nations activities in peacekeeping operations. The resolution now offers a framework for structuring the efforts of the entire United Nations system and other actors in that respect. Integrating the gender perspective is now an important element in new United Nations peacekeeping missions. Commendable efforts have been agreed upon to ensure better a representation of women at all decision-making and operational levels in carrying out peace missions. Gender advisers make a real contribution to women's equality, and this contribution is recognized and welcomed. These efforts are still insufficient, however, and results fall far short of what was hoped for in resolution 1325 (2000). The Secretary-General plans to analyse the situation and develop strategies to remedy the situation, and we welcome this.

We must recognize that strengthening resolution 1325 (2000) and the means for its implementation, inter alia by establishing a monitoring system under the authority of the Council, underlies the Council's desire to act as a catalyst for action by the entire international community. In pursuing that aim, however, we run the risk of exceeding the scope of resolution 1325 (2000). The question therefore arises of whether the Security Council is the best place for carrying out such a multidimensional activity, because of the possible implications and since such an endeavour would involve many governmental and non-governmental actors. Being proactive on such an important issue as protecting women against violence is certainly commendable, but success in such an ambitious endeavour requires political will and significant resources. The temptation for the Security Council to become the architect and supervisor of United Nations strategy in this area could come up against objective difficulties and jeopardize the credibility of the Council.

Implementing resolution 1325 (2000) also requires collective and united action by the international community. Such unity, however, has often been absent in the economic and social dimension of conflict prevention and the establishment of lasting peace and stability. Promoting the role of women and protecting them is inconceivable without the resources to combat extreme poverty and disease. Unless the international community is sufficiently supportive, the majority of countries emerging from conflict fall back into war and violence, as we all know.

Finally, we have to consider the implications of the Council being forced to exceed its own area of competency because of the multidimensional and multisectoral nature of this issue. This would threaten to weaken the authority of organs and mechanisms that deal with the status of women and human rights in general. I am thinking here of encroachment on the powers of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on the Status of Women and human rights treaty bodies. We have to make sure that the Council's actions are in accordance with its mandate and that they complement the work of other players. There needs to be a coherent strategy and coordinated implementation. In out view, the General Assembly is the forum that should be responsible for designing such a policy.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I am pleased that you have taken the initiative of holding this open debate on women and peace and security and that you have focused it on the issue of the violence besetting women in armed conflicts. Copies of my detailed statement are available in the Chamber.

After fully associating my delegation with the statement to be made shortly by the Dutch presidency of the European Union, I should merely like here to

emphasize three points related to follow-up on resolution 1325 (2000) and to make some suggestions. I shall begin with the points.

First, it is certainly important to ensure the quality of the thematic and country reports that are submitted to the Council by the Secretary-General. In that regard, I note the commitment made by the Secretary-General in the report to make sure that such reports do not overlook that issue. We are well aware that technical constraints limit the volume of reports. Therefore, we should probably think about how the Council could best obtain more precise elements in a way yet to be defined. My delegation would favour the holding, on a periodic basis and in the appropriate format, of meetings of Council members on that subject — probably at the expert level, with advisers on parity issues. That issue could be discussed.

My second point concerns the gender-specific content of mandates. France, for its part, is committed to ensuring that the mandates of peacekeeping operations systematically include a gender-based aspect and aim specifically at resolution 1325 (2000). I might mention that the mandates envisaged for the operations in Côte d'Ivoire and Burundi — a recent initiative on the part of my country — contain many references to the situation of women and actions taken by women in those countries. I would add that, in the draft resolution France is introducing on children and armed conflict, we made sure to specifically address the issue of girl soldiers, which is too often absent from programmes of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation. As I pledged last year, we will spare no effort in that regard.

My third point relates to Council missions on the ground. In the days to come, we will carry out another Security Council mission in the Great Lakes region, which my delegation is preparing. On that occasion, we plan to make contact, as we did last year, with women's associations. I recall that we made such contacts in Bunia and Bujumbura last year. In that regard, this Council mission must also examine how United Nations operations carry out their mandates and manage to work at both the national and the regional levels. But I would like to conclude these remarks by congratulating Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and, through him, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, on all their efforts over the past two years.

I listened most attentively to the statements of Ms. Arbour and Ms. Obaid on violence against women in conflict situations. Such violence is appalling. In the past few months, the Council's attention has been drawn to several situations in which such violence has been particularly grave — in Ituri, Kivu, Burundi and, of course, Darfur.

We certainly have the same concern: how can such tragedies be prevented? Undoubtedly, there are several courses of action. My country has always believed that we clearly have not given enough attention to the warning signs of gender-based violence. The Secretary-General was quite right to point out our collective failure to prevent such violence. We are convinced that a society that lowers its vigilance or ignores problems of violence in times of peace will expose itself to the worst atrocities in periods of crisis. We therefore must redouble our efforts to better assess the scope and nature of such violence in peacetime. That is why France, for the year 2004, will make a financial contribution to the study on all forms violence against women that the General Assembly requested from the Secretary-General for its sixtieth session, in 2005.

Secondly, when such disturbing information is communicated to us, we must act more effectively. We believe that that depends on the swift deployment of human rights observers, who can report such violence but also provide technical assistance to the local authorities to put an end to such atrocities. In that regard, we welcome Ms. Arbour's announcement that a rapid reaction team will soon be established in Geneva. It is also essential that such crimes be brought to the Council's attention so that it can act appropriately. We believe that having the Council hear reports by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is very valuable in that regard.

Thirdly and finally, we are confronted by the issue of impunity. We must ensure that the guilty are punished and that the victims receive protection and compensation. That is an important task. The Council often addresses this issue and furthermore is confronted by it quite frequently. We believe that we must strengthen the means to combat impunity at all levels — ministries of justice and of the interior, prisons, prosecutors, judges, attorneys — in the countries or situations where it is found.

But the United Nations must also set an example. Whenever it seems possible and desirable, the Organization must provide assistance to national jurisdictions. Aside from that, the Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda have done pioneering work in their jurisprudence on gender-based crimes, even if the hearings have not always focused enough on that aspect. In any case, we are also pleased to see more women judges on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Lastly, obviously there is also the International Criminal Court. Its recent decisions to open hearings on crimes under its competence committed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Uganda are clearly major developments in the fight against impunity in those countries.

I cannot conclude my statement without paying tribute to the action taken by civil society to promote the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). I am pleased that one of its representatives was invited to contribute to our debate. My delegation invites non-governmental organizations to continue to prompt the Council so that resolution 1325 (2000) will inspire still more of our work.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): Today, the Security Council is meeting four years after the adoption of its important resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. It is an occasion on which to assess the progress achieved and the gaps and challenges remaining in the implementation of the resolution. The presence of distinguished personalities at the meeting attests to the importance of this debate and of the subject matter we are addressing.

Resolution 1325 (2000) deals with fundamental issues relating to the Security Council's mandate and the wider concerns of the international community. The main thrust of the resolution regards the participation and involvement of women in our collective efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, the protection of women and girls from human rights abuses — which constitute the most abhorrent and condemnable aspect of present-day conflict — and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in issues directly related to conflict and post-conflict situations.

Those are the main subjects dealt with by resolution 1325 (2000), which the Security Council, the United Nations system, States, civil society and other actors must address in order to advance the fundamental role that women can and should play in ensuring a more peaceful, just and equitable world.

The Security Council's adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) reflected a three-fold reality. First, it recognized women's potential in contributing to the prevention of conflict. In their communities, women are the most reliable source of information about mounting tensions and signs of instability, not to mention signs of gender violence, and if their views are taken into account, they can play a decisive role in providing early warning of conflict.

In the report before us (S/2004/814), the Secretary-General acknowledges the unique role played by indigenous women in conflict resolution as mediators and peace-builders and, in that context, expresses his intention to develop a strategy and an action plan to increase the attention focused on gender perspectives in conflict prevention and to ensure that women's contributions, needs and priorities are included in conflict-prevention strategies and early-warning efforts.

The second reality is that women and girls are the most conspicuous victims of violence in situations of armed conflict, as a result of non-compliance by parties to conflict with international humanitarian, human rights, refugee and criminal law. Indeed, there has been international recognition of the seriousness of gender-based violence and a growing international commitment to ensure accountability. Key challenges confronting States and the international community include the need to apply increased pressure on parties to armed conflict to cease such violence, to bring to justice the perpetrators of such crimes against women, to ensure the effective prosecution of gender-based violence and to end impunity.

The third reality is the need to mainstream gender perspectives in relation to issues directly related to conflict and post-conflict situations. The adoption of the resolution provided an impetus to include gender concerns as a regular part of peacekeeping mission mandates, and gender advisers have been included in every multidimensional peacekeeping operation. The development of a comprehensive strategy and action plan for mainstreaming gender perspectives into peacekeeping operations, in particular in the planning of new operations, as stated in the Secretary-General's report, would translate into reality this important policy principle, embodied in resolution 1325 (2000).

We still have a long way to go towards fully implementing resolution 1325 (2000), and the remaining challenges must be addressed by all stakeholders. Member States, the Security Council, the United Nations system and civil society organizations must pool their efforts, enhance coordination and adopt creative approaches to advocacy, education and mobilization in all areas relating to the resolution. Civil society and its organizations are already playing an important role in this respect, and that potential should be further enhanced. The role of women's networks in improving conditions for women is well known; if properly supported, they can play an increasingly important role in conflict prevention and peace-building and in ensuring access to justice for all women.

Monitoring and reporting on implementation are crucial issues in making resolution 1325 (2000) fully operational. The recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report give particular emphasis to that issue by establishing provisions for monitoring and reporting on all areas related to the resolution. The Secretary-General expresses his intention to routinely incorporate gender perspectives in all thematic and country reports to the Security Council and to continue to closely monitor the progress made.

Taking account of proposals made during the open debate last year (see S/PV.4852), we are of the view that the Security Council should consider establishing a mechanism to monitor the progress accomplished on this very important issue.

In conclusion, I would like to express my country's commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In July this year, an Angolan delegation met with experts from the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to discuss Angola's first report to the Committee. The Angolan Vice-Minister for Family and the Promotion of Women, in a statement to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-eighth session, declared:

> "Despite the recognition given to Angolan women for their efforts and their involvement in peace promotion, they seldom have an equal participation in decisions that lead to peace. Nor do they participate in conflict resolution. Even so, women are often the first to reach across ethnic and religious divides in order to rebuild communities and families torn apart due to violence."

Nonetheless, Angolan women are making great strides. They are showing remarkable will and determination to overcome their present situation, and we are convinced that they will be successful in a relatively short period of time.

The Declaration of heads of State or Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) committed SADC member States to ensuring equal representation of women and men in the process of decision-making at all levels and in SADC's structures, and to attain, by 2005, 30 per cent representation by women in political structures and decision-making bodies. It is our hope that that Declaration will be translated into reality and will provide a decisive boost for women's emancipation in Southern Africa, and in Angola in particular.

With the electoral process due to take place in 2006, Angolan women will have a unique opportunity to claim their fair share in the decision-making structures of the country — an endeavour to which we believe they are equal.

Finally, we are pleased to express our full support for the presidential statement that the President of the Security Council will deliver later on behalf of the Council, which contains important proposals for the further implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I would like to join colleagues in congratulating the United Kingdom presidency on having convened this open debate on women, peace and security, as we mark the fourth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We express deep appreciation for the thoughtful presentations by Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno, High Commissioner Louise Arbour and Executive Director Thoraya Obaid.

History bears witness to the fact that women and girls suffer disproportionate violence and exploitation in conflict situations. Resolution 1325 (2000) made a landmark contribution to the normative framework being developed for the protection of women and girls in armed conflict.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his follow-up report (S/2004/814) on the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The report graphically illustrates just how much ground we have

covered in implementing the resolution and how far we still have to go before our goals can be fully realized. The report highlights the "major gaps and challenges [that] remain in all areas" (*para. 4*). The Secretary-General says that our collective response remains inadequate. He regrets our collective failure in preventing such violence and protecting women and girls.

Murder, systematic and widespread rape and other forms of gender violence continue to be reported from various ongoing conflict situations. This morally unacceptable scourge of gender-based violence persists because of a culture of impunity which pervades situations of armed conflict. Most acts of violence against women are never investigated because of indifference, inaction or complicity on the part of the relevant authorities. The perpetrators are rarely, if ever, prosecuted and the victims often have little or no access to the justice system. This must all change if we seriously want to stop gender-based violence.

The first priority must be to end impunity. In previous debates on this item, my delegation has called for the adoption of a declaration whereby the targeting of women — especially the use of rape as an instrument of war — will be considered a war crime, and be subject to national and international punishment. The proposed declaration would send an unambiguous message to perpetrators that they will have to account for such insidious acts.

The second priority should be to demand from all parties to conflicts full respect for and compliance with international humanitarian law and other relevant instruments on the protection of women. Pakistan earlier proposed initiating a study of recent and ongoing conflict situations to identify crimes committed against women, with a view to seeking redress and compensation for the victims.

The third priority should be to build the wherewithal for "gender justice" in post-conflict situations, incorporating gender perspectives across the broad spectrum of reconstruction efforts. This would, inter alia, require the reforming and rebuilding of the judicial, legislative and electoral sectors, as well as the economic, social and political empowerment of women within a culturally sensitive framework.

The Secretary-General has noted in his report (S/2004/814) that the most significant progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has been made in the peacekeeping arena.

As the largest troop-contributing country, Pakistan fully recognizes the important role of women in peacekeeping operations. We are proud of our female military officers who have served as doctors and nurses in difficult and dangerous operations in Africa and the Balkans. We fully support the mainstreaming of gender perspective in peacekeeping operations and believe that the appointment of gender advisors in the field and at Headquarters has served a useful purpose.

Pakistan is equally conscious of the importance of gender sensitization of peacekeeping troops and is complying with this important aspect by incorporating the two United Nations Standard Generic Training Modules in its training doctrine.

Pakistan proposed in the debate last year that peacekeeping operations monitor and regularly report to the Security Council on the situation of women and girls in their mission areas. We are therefore glad to support the intention of the Secretary-General to include specific monitoring and reporting mechanisms in his comprehensive strategy and action plan for mainstreaming gender perspectives in peacekeeping operations.

Despite the best intentions and ongoing efforts, the wider implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) remains a formidable challenge in its goals of both protecting women and increasing their participation. Fundamentally, in our view, three requirements remain indispensable: first, universal awareness about resolution 1325 (2000) and the obligations it entails; secondly, the sustained and long-term political commitment of the Security Council, Member States and national and international stakeholders; and thirdly, the commitment of substantial human and financial resources.

For their part, the Security Council and the United Nations system could do much more to advance this process for the protection and participation of women. We propose the following ten measures.

First, the United Nations must develop a comprehensive strategy for conflict prevention and resolution, with special emphasis on the protection of women and girls. Secondly, it must continue to strengthen provisions in its resolutions to ensure full

compliance with international humanitarian law, end impunity, and demand accountability for the perpetrators of crimes against women. Thirdly, the Council must persist in including gender perspectives in its resolutions. Fourthly, systematic efforts must be undertaken to address the so-called "gender deficit" in the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes. Fifthly, the United Nations and its agencies should develop ways to address the special needs of women and girls affected by conflict, including health and psychological care. Sixth, the Council and the United Nations system must work to ensure the fullest possible participation by women in peace processes, as well as in post-conflict peace-building activities. Seventh, the Council must continue its practice of conducting a yearly review of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Eighth, the issues of women and peace and security should be included in the terms of reference for all Council missions. Ninth, the Council and the United Nations must strengthen the partnership with civil society and hold Arria-formula meetings on resolution 1325 (2000) at least once every six months.

Finally, the Council should enhance its coordination with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, with a view to evolving a composite approach, particularly with regard to the economic, social and political empowerment of women and their participation in post-conflict reconstruction.

Mr. Trautwein (Germany): We greatly welcome this year's debate marking the fourth anniversary of this important resolution and thank you, Sir, for having taken this important initiative. We particularly welcome the fact that the focus is on gender-based violence and on strategies addressing that problem.

I thank Mr. Guéhenno, Mrs. Arbour and Ms. Obaid for their important briefings this morning. My delegation also aligns itself with the statement that will be delivered by the Dutch Ambassador later, on behalf of the presidency of the European Union.

Violence against women is an issue of the highest priority because of its human, political, social and economic dimensions. The phenomenon of gender-based violence can be overcome only by the empowerment of women in all aspects of public and private life.

Unfortunately, the list of countries in conflict having a history of gender-based atrocities is long and includes countries from all continents, including Haiti, Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, the former Yugoslavia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and others. The fact that women account for the vast majority of victims of conflicts and are still significantly underrepresented at all levels of decision-making indicates that we need tools and instruments that promote our common vision as expressed in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

The continuing extreme violence against women and girls in the Darfur region is a case in point. In order to improve the situation, as well as the future prospects for women in the Sudan, a gender dimension must be integrated into the peace talks. The ratification by the Sudanese Government of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women — the 25th anniversary of which has just been celebrated — would mark another significant step in the right direction.

I would like to welcome the excellent proposals by the Secretary-General on how to implement resolution 1325 (2000), which aim at addressing the issue of women, peace and security in an active way. While fundamentally agreeing with all of those proposals, I would like to focus on several of their action-oriented aspects.

A gender unit is the main guarantor for the effective integration of a gender perspective in any United Nations mission. The Minister of State of the German Foreign Office referred to this requirement during last October's debate on resolution 1325 (2000), at that time referring to the United Nations mission in Afghanistan. However, a gender unit alone is not sufficient even if it is supplied with adequate resources, which, unfortunately, is quite often still not the case. Given the scope of gender-based discrimination, including violence, we need to ensure that all substantive units of a peacekeeping operation, starting with the United Nations assessment team, include specialists with gender expertise.

Therefore, more personnel with gender expertise have to be selected during the recruitment process. That also requires that the United Nations continue to train its personnel, including at the level of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and that Member States invest more in gender training of potential peacekeeping staff. The German Government has made the latter a political priority in its

endeavours. We strongly believe in the need for accountability for wartime violence against women, and in the necessity to end impunity. Time-bound goals concerning the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) will be very helpful in that regard.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) certainly has a key role to play with regard to the investigation and prosecution of gender-based crimes. However, its efforts must be supplemented by national legal mechanisms. I also would like to mention the very recent initiative for a conference on gender justice organized by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and others. Let me express the hope that there will be a concrete follow-up on the key issue of gender justice.

We are now beginning to understand that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes, which have long been neglected, must also be targeted to include women and girls, since in Africa, for instance, one-third of the combatants, including their so-called supporters, are female. As far as reintegration is concerned, we have to respect that female ex-combatants might well not wish to be reintegrated into structures in which their rights, including economic rights, are not guaranteed.

Let me re-emphasize that Germany, a friend of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), is deeply committed to the vision set forth in that landmark resolution and has undertaken various efforts to realize that vision. Germany is one of the few countries to have provided a detailed report on its national initiatives concerning the implementation of that resolution. We stress the need to include women at all levels of peace negotiations and conflict resolution. The promotion of the full participation of women in post-conflict and reconstruction processes is a political priority.

Having said that, I wish to stress the fact that more can be done by Member States in supporting the United Nations system-wide implementation of the resolution, in all its aspects. From our point of view, the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, uniting member States and non-member States of the Security Council, should integrate a gender perspective into its work, as a matter of priority.

Finally, I wish to emphasize the very important contribution of civil society and, in particular, of the non-governmental organizations, which were rightly given an opportunity to meet with the members of the Security Council in an Arrias-style meeting last week.

We welcome initiatives, such as those by Canada, Chile, the United Kingdom and the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, to organize round tables with representatives from all Security Council member States, where strategies on the full implementation of the resolution are discussed in a remarkably open and constructive atmosphere.

Mr. Moritán (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the initiative taken by the United Kingdom presidency to hold an open debate on the fourth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. The resolution has already demonstrated its importance in peacekeeping operations, post-conflict reconstruction and conflict prevention. Our task is to perfect that instrument in order to make it more effective and universal.

We would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, Ms. Louise Arbour, High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Ms. Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, for their briefings to the Security Council. We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the important information and suggestions contained therein.

The struggle of women for their rights is a question of paramount importance to Brazil. Our Constitution reflects the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and guarantees full equality between men and women. It also recognizes the special needs of women in certain circumstances and the duty of the State to give them the necessary guarantees.

Brazil also recognizes the importance of the leadership role that women should play in situations of conflict, post-conflict and conflict-prevention — as stipulated in the Beijing Platform for Action.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and efforts to implement it are crucial in order to pursue work that began more than 30 years ago and is still ongoing in the United Nations agencies and programmes and in Member States. Since the year 2000, much has been done to turn the concepts contained in Security Council decisions into reality; however, difficulties and obstacles remain numerous.

First and foremost, we must be aware of the fact that the issue discussed in the Council can not be restricted to women as vulnerable victims of conflicts, but they must also be considered as actors in the peace process, as agents in rebuilding society and as peacekeepers. All aspects of that issue are essential and should be addressed by the Organization.

The proliferation of civil conflicts over the past 15 years has particularly affected the situation of women involved in those disputes, as they are confronted by regular or irregular military forces. Sexual crimes, trafficking in women and other forms of violations of human rights have become tools of war and have been on the rise.

Degradation in the status of women has characterized many of the conflicts, which have created waves of violence and violations of rights that are not directly related to the conflict, but are related to a breakdown of society. Those forms of violence further inflame wars and made them more difficult to resolve. The international community must use all tools available and prepare new tools to combat that evil. We welcome the ongoing and repeated condemnation by the main bodies of the United Nations against those practices against women, because revealing the existence of such practices is fundamental to efforts to eliminate them.

It is also worthwhile to mention the work of women and women's groups that have overcome ethnic and religious divisions to contribute to sustainable peace, in many regions in turmoil.

Brazil supports the inclusion in legislation and national institutions — with international cooperation — of specific measure to penalize those who commit crimes against women. We want the International Criminal Court to have an important role in prosecuting those accused of gender-based violations.

Building up the rule of law can not be carried out without establishing the specific impact of a conflict on women and girls. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women spells out obligations of States to guarantee gender equality, but that is not enough. We must guarantee the participation of women, as well as that of women's groups, in building the State.

In that connection, the international community must make more progress. Few women's organizations are participating in peace negotiations or in disarmament exercises, thereby losing precious contributions that can contribute to the success of such processes.

An important measure would be to make sure that an increasing number of women register to vote and also become candidates, thereby making it possible for women to participate in key positions at the time of the reconstruction of a State.

As has been emphasized, preventing and punishing violations of the rights of women is not enough. It is necessary to work to make certain that they take on their full role as actors.

The report of the Secretary-General recommends relevant strategies — whose implementation requires local and international efforts — that have positive prospects for the future. There are clear advantages to ensuring that women and groups of women participate in early warning systems to prevent conflict from starting at the local level; however, such initiatives have not been used much yet. Another important possibility is to work to make sure that women play a greater role in organizing communities of refugees, in combating epidemics, in particular HIV/AIDS, and in guaranteeing adequate conditions for reproductive health.

In order for those initiatives to take a positive turn, it is necessary that the international community not forget the political or the material means needed for their implementation. International organizations and Member States must overcome age-old mindsets that do not include gender mainstreaming in all processes of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, or post-conflict reconstruction. There must also be funds available in order to implement those projects — the donor community can not wait until a conflict region is completely stable before beginning to finance such projects.

In the area of peacekeeping, you can find some of the most significant progress made concerning women in armed conflicts. We particularly welcome the inclusion of gender aspects in all of the mandates recently adopted by the Security Council, including the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

(MINUSTAH), and the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB).

We have also noted the attention given by the Security Council to the topic, since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). In future, we must make certain that such attention does not stray, and that it in fact become institutionalized.

Despite the progress made, we have still not made the desired progress towards establishing a substantial presence of women in peacekeeping operations. The Secretariat's statistics on women in peacekeeping operations — 1 per cent of military personnel and 5 per cent of police — make clear that there is need for ongoing, progressive action to reach an appropriate ratio.

Peacekeeping missions should coordinate closely with the organs, programmes and agencies of the United Nations in the elaboration of peacekeeping mission policies. We commend the coordination work already under way involving elements of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, as well as the secretariat for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, among others. We also draw attention to the importance of ensuring an adequate presence of women in high-ranking positions of the Secretariat.

Brazil underlines in particular the need for cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, under Article 65 of the Charter, to link peace, security, reconstruction and development. There are already success stories of cooperation, such as those of the Economic and Social Council's ad hoc groups for Guinea-Bissau and Burundi. Those experiences should be reproduced and enhanced, specifically taking into account the question of gender.

In conclusion, I consider it important to underline that the actions taken to promote the question of women in armed conflicts should be capped with broad and inclusive strategies for disseminating information on this important issue. All organs, agencies and programmes of the United Nations, as well as Member States, have a responsibility to communicate their efforts in order to highlight problems and possible solutions and to receive the necessary cooperation.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): At the outset, I wish to indicate that Romania fully associates itself with the statement to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union. My remarks will therefore be specific and brief.

Over the past four years, resolution 1325 (2000) has been an effective tool in raising awareness on the increased variety and intensity of sexual violence directed against women and girls. One specific form of such violence is trafficking in human beings, especially women and girls, for the purpose of forcing them into prostitution. One of my country's main concerns in this context is the extent to which such an abhorrent practice has developed in certain parts of the Balkans that have been affected by the civil wars that followed the break-up of Yugoslavia. According to information gathered within the United Nations system, 200,000 women are trafficked throughout the Balkans each year.

As mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2004/814), sexual exploitation and abuse are forms of gender-based violence that can be perpetrated by anyone in a position of power and trust. That regrettably includes members of peacekeeping missions deployed in the field, both military and civilian, of whom we would rather expect complete dedication and hard work to ensure the conditions for pacification and the post-conflict rehabilitation of societies shattered by war. The majority of women trafficked in the Balkans end up as prostitutes in areas where peacekeeping forces are deployed. That situation causes enormous suffering for women in the region, as they are the main target of traffickers. Governments of troop-contributing countries and representatives of civil society have a joint responsibility to help eradicate this scourge.

We commend the efforts of the Secretary-General to institute a number of measures to address sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel involved in peacekeeping operations. We note with satisfaction the issuance of a special bulletin and the subsequent development by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of a number of tools for its implementation, such as training materials, a complaints mechanism and a compilation of disciplinary directives for civilian, military and civilian police personnel.

Concerning the specific situation in the Balkans, we believe that there is even more room for safeguards. As a country contributing troops to peacekeeping efforts in the region, Romania welcomes the decision of the Istanbul Summit of NATO to adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards the sexual abuse by NATO soldiers of victims of trafficking. Adopting and implementing such policies is a fine way of doing justice to the requirements set out in resolution 1325 (2000).

As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, coordination and partnership are critical to ensuring complementarity among all actors and the effective use of resources. With a view to responding to the recommendations contained in that report, peacekeeping forces in the Balkans will need to work more with local and police authorities in Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia to combat trafficking in women. Training courses for deployed troops on trafficking need to be elaborated and carried out. Local and international organizations will have to be mobilized to protect and house women victims of trafficking, and peacekeepers will need to work to maintain very close relations with such organizations.

Finally, it is essential to develop methods to monitor progress in combating trafficking and to establish a confidential internal system within the military to report infringements of the zero-tolerance policy. Such a system, we believe, could be related to the comprehensive monitoring and reporting mechanism that will be built into the system-wide strategy and action plan to be elaborated by the Secretary-General.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for convening and presiding over this important meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2004/814) and thank Under-Secretary-General Mr. Guéhenno, Mrs. Arbour and Ms. Obaid for their briefings.

Women have become the most directly and hardest hit victims of many of the conflicts that we see today. There is now a broad consensus on providing effective protection to women in conflicts and allowing them to play an adequate role in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. Some positive progress has been made in that regard. However, much more needs to be done to achieve our common vision.

First, efforts need to be intensified in the areas of conflict prevention and conflict resolution. Early warning mechanisms need to be strengthened to defuse conflicts in their early stages and prevent them from escalating into large-scale violence. Secondly, there is a need to strengthen legislation to punish sex offenders, using existing mechanisms to bring the perpetrators to justice and to help countries complete their legal frameworks, build capacity and intensify efforts to prosecute gender crimes. Thirdly, increased contributions to humanitarian assistance are required. The international community should join efforts to provide timely assistance to the victims of conflicts. Donor countries can contribute greater resources. Fourthly, women need assistance to become fully involved in peace negotiations and to ensure that the relevant peace agreements include the protection of women's rights and interests. Fifthly, the positive role played by local women's organizations should be valued and supported and the necessary assistance should be provided. Sixthly, the representation of women in peacekeeping and peace-building should be increased. The Secretary-General might consider appointing more women as special representatives and promoting women to other high-ranking positions, as appropriate to specific situations. Member States may also wish to provide more women officials to peacekeeping operations.

Protecting women's rights and interests and giving them a greater role to play requires coordinated efforts on the part of the international community. Member States, international organizations and civil society should support and complement each other's work. United Nations bodies and agencies should carry out their respective duties and optimize the use of resources to achieve maximum synergy. In fulfilling its responsibilities, the Security Council should enhance its efforts to defuse and resolve conflicts and thus keep women out of harm's way by removing the root causes.

The international community should provide timely help to countries in conflict and war so that they can restore stability, develop their economies, strengthen the rule of law, carry out institution-building and promote integrated social development. Only in an environment of peace and security can we achieve the best possible protection for women's rights and interests and can women play a greater and more constructive role.

Mr. Karev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Much has been done in the four years since resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted. We are grateful to the Under-Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund for their statements reviewing accomplishments over the past four years and describing the basic priorities for the future implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We are pleased to see that the issues before us today are being given increasing attention not only by the Security Council, but also by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, particularly the Commission on the Status of Women. Progress has been made on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of steps taken in that area, taking account of changing trends and, accordingly, the new conditions for introducing gender issues into all aspects of United Nations activities within existing resources.

Despite the very intensive focus on those issues, however, we must acknowledge that considerable efforts still need to be made to overcome their negative repercussions. As to specific action in that respect, we are pleased to refer to the report of the Secretary-General in document S/2004/814, which describes in detail the steps taken to implement resolution 1325 (2000). Most importantly, it contains useful recommendations that will certainly require quite some time to study thoroughly.

Unfortunately, many recommendations remain stuck on the paper on which they are written, while others have been only partially implemented. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's initiative to prepare a comprehensive system-wide strategy and plan of action to enable us to focus the work of the Organization in that respect. It is most important here to avoid overly generalized and stereotyped conclusions and recommendations. The preparation of comprehensive and all-inclusive approaches must not hinder the search for solutions to specific problems in any given situation. A good example in that respect could be the drafting of guidelines to increase awareness of the needs of women in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.

We are convinced that women can play an important role in conflict prevention and settlement and we endorse the Secretary-General's intention to develop strategies to ensure the equal participation of women in peace negotiations and election processes. In the context of post-conflict recovery, we support the appeal for broader recourse to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as a benchmark document.

Much remains to be done to ensure that systematic account is taken of the gender perspective in planning, implementation, monitoring and accountability. It is important, however, that the inclusion of the gender perspective in work on the ground be not merely declaratory, but that it yield genuine results in protecting and improving the situation of women and girls in conflicts and post-conflict societies.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm our belief that the issues of combating manifestations of discrimination and violence against women, the situation of women in conflict, and their participation in peacekeeping and post-conflict settlement will be considered as a whole and remain on the agendas not only of the Security Council, but also of the most important global and regional international forums.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United Kingdom.

I associate myself with the remarks to be delivered subsequently by the representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union and I extend my thanks to all those who are participating in today's meeting.

Much of today's meeting has looked at how the United Nations can better ensure sustainable peace by strengthening efforts to further the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). There is more the Council must do, too, along with the wider United Nations membership here in New York, but crucially, resolution 1325 (2000) must also be implemented at the national level by all United Nations Member States if it is to be fully effective. The United Kingdom is therefore currently examining how it can best use the opportunity of our presidencies of the G-8 and the European Union next year to ensure wider implementation of that key resolution.

In London, we are currently developing a Government-wide action plan for our implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), linking development,

humanitarian, defence and diplomacy work. The United Kingdom Ministry of Defence has recently launched action across the armed services to ensure that the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) are implemented systematically in the Ministry's planning, doctrine and training programmes. The Department of International Development is acting similarly and developing case studies of Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

But efforts at the national level have to be complemented by action overseas. Thus, in Afghanistan, the United Kingdom worked to get Afghan women to take up their rightful role in the recent elections, in voter registration and as campaigners and officials, and to take up their quotas for representation in Parliament. I think we can all be pleased that, in Afghanistan, women represented over 40 per cent of the voter turnout recently.

In June, the United Kingdom organized a training seminar in Cairo to assist Iraqi women in developing their positive participation. We have also held workshops in Baghdad and in Basra that have helped women on the role of democracy and democratic values, thus combining women's rights with long-term conflict prevention.

The United Kingdom is funding a local project to empower Arab women with leadership skills in order to provide active role models to encourage women to become future election candidates. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we are working closely with partners to develop action plans to ensure women's full participation in the election as voters, potential leaders, civic educators and election observers, as well as contributors to the ongoing peace and transition process in their country. In East Timor, we are funding training workshops for election candidates and helping the civil police integrate gender perspectives into their work.

Equally important, however, is to recognize that, to support the role that civil society can play is absolutely crucial in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). That is why the United Kingdom is cooperating with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in many areas and in many theatres of conflict. Civil society has played a key role in driving forward the implementation of that resolution through advocacy, training and awareness-raising. I would like to commend the civil society representatives here today for their dedication and for their work in holding the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, to account for its actions on resolution 1325 (2000). Their contribution to this process is vital.

I would also like to thank Ms. Agathe Rwankuba for travelling from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to be able to talk to us today. It is important that the voices of civil society are heard in the Council, because it is often the NGO community that really bears witness at the heart of conflict situations.

Resolution 1325 (2000) explicitly calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence. It emphasizes that it is the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for war crimes, including those crimes related to sexual and other violence against women and girls. The Council must assume responsibility for enforcing those provisions of the resolution. That means ensuring that those aspects are fully included in the resolutions that set up peacekeeping operations, and that they are mainstreamed into the work of all members of the United Nations family in the field. We, the United Nations system and Member States, must all work harder to implement resolution 1325 (2000). I hope today's meeting will spur us all on to face the challenges.

But we also have to recognize our responsibility to improve the situation faced by women in post-conflict situations. Suffering from sexual violence does not end with the signing of a peace accord. We know that we must, on the one hand, do more to prevent women from becoming victims of conflict; but we also have to ensure that women are not also victims of the post-conflict situation. Conflict or the social and economic uncertainties of the post-conflict environment often force women into prostitution or sexual slavery as the only means to survive or to support themselves and their families.

Our obligation is clear: we have to create a post-conflict environment that offers hope. Women must be full and equal participants in the building of peace — in the development of post-conflict legislative, judicial and constitutional structures — because that is the only way that those structures will be fully representative of the post-conflict society, and therefore fully able to

meet the needs and demands of all. That is sustainable peace.

We must never allow the sexual exploitation and abuse of women in any circumstances in post-conflict situations, regardless of who is responsible for the exploitation and the abuse. We have to be very clear on that. United Nations personnel are our representatives on the ground. They embody our determination to bring peace, security, justice and equality. If they, of all people, abuse their position of trust, they are also abusing the will of the international community.

The United Kingdom hopes that the adoption of the presidential statement by the Council today will be the first step in addressing the challenges identified in the Secretary-General's report. When we next review progress, we need to demonstrate that we have made real improvements in implementation. The truth is that, if we want to do justice to peace, then we have to do justice to resolution 1325 (2000).

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

In order to optimize the use of our time, I will not individually invite speakers to take their seats at the Council table. But when a speaker is taking the floor, the Conference Officer will seat the next speaker on the list at the table, in readiness to address the Council. I thank participants in advance for their cooperation in that regard.

I would now like to call on the representative of Canada.

Ms. Jaffer (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I am pleased to address the Security Council today on behalf of Canada, which currently holds the chair of the Human Security Network, an interregional group of countries that includes Austria, Chile, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, with South Africa as an observer. On behalf of the countries of the Human Security Network, I would like to thank the United Kingdom for presiding over this open debate on women and peace and security, which is a priority issue for the Network. I would also like to welcome the compelling presentations made today. The representatives around the Council table are a reflection of the expertise at the disposal of the United Nations system. They also serve to underscore the need to work in cooperation with the various bodies of the Organization.

(*spoke in English*)

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his invaluable report (S/2004/814), which marks the progress we have made, and highlights the challenges we continue to face, in implementing resolution 1325 (2000).

We welcome the work that the United Nations has already done to increase the representation of women in all institutions of the United Nations. But we also draw attention to the need for more work to be done in that area, particularly in increasing the representation of women at all levels of decision-making, including as military observers, civilian police, peacekeepers, human rights and humanitarian personnel in United Nations field operations, and as special representatives of the Secretary-General. Countries contributing personnel to peace support operations must, for their part, establish a viable recruitment base that includes the admission of women to their military and police services and appropriate training for all personnel that incorporates a gender perspective.

Human Security Network members welcome the Conference on Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Situations, whose theme was "Peace needs women and women need justice", and which was held from 15 to 17 September 2004 in New York. The conclusions and recommendations of the Conference, organized by the International Legal Assistance Consortium and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, represent a valuable contribution towards better understanding the importance of gender justice in the context of the overall effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

I would like to focus my remarks today on one key aspect of follow-up to resolution 1325 (2000), namely, the issue of gender-based violence. Gender-based violence, including sexual abuse and exploitation, have become alarmingly pervasive during conflict situations. We know that hundreds of thousands of women and girls have been raped in situations of armed conflict, and that sexual exploitation continues to be used as a tool of war in many countries. We also know that there has been a dramatic increase in domestic violence in conflict and post-conflict zones. In his report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict last June, the Secretary-

General argued that "we are failing in our collective responsibility to protect women and children from the increasing horrors of sexual and gender-based violence" (*S/2004/431, para. 28*). It is the role of the Security Council to work together with countries and Governments, where they exist, to address such crimes.

As we mark the fourth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) and look to other important commitments — such as the protection of civilians and children in armed conflict and important milestones, including the 10-year review of the 1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women — it is now more than ever the time to take strong and concerted action in every situation of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. As the international community continues its efforts in countries outlined in the Secretary-General's report, it cannot falter in its commitments.

Some important progress has been made in constructing an international framework to address gender-based violence in armed conflict. In the past 10 years, more systematic attention has been devoted to the development of international standards and norms to combat violence against women and to build on existing international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions. The most significant result of these efforts has been the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which specifically defines rape and other forms of violence against women as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia subsequently ruled that creating an atmosphere of sexual violence by, for example, making humiliating sexual threats, raping young girls, and keeping women in captivity and "lending" them out for the purpose of rape and sexual abuse is a crime.

We know that accountability for sexual and gender-based violence is an important aspect of gender justice, particularly in the context of armed conflict. The development of jurisprudence and the prosecution of perpetrators of violence against women and girls through international, regional, and national legal institutions is a crucial step in the fight against impunity for gender-based violence.

We strongly encourage the United Nations to strengthen all procedures and mechanisms used to investigate, report, and prosecute violence against women in armed conflict.

And yet, as critical as the development of norms and standards is, this must be matched by concerted efforts to ensure their implementation, monitoring and evaluation. As the Special Rapporteur on violence against women has stated, if the past 10 years have focused on standard-setting and raising awareness of the issue, then the next 10 years need to focus on implementing and developing strategies to effectively protect women and girls from violence.

The United Nations system, including the Security Council, has a critical role to play in this regard, particularly in conflict and post-conflict environments. In this respect, we must be determined, vigilant and consistent in our efforts. And in this, the Security Council must lead the way.

Members of the Human Security Network welcomed the development and issuance last year of the Secretary-General's bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. This bulletin provides a much-needed accountability framework for the United Nations system. It also provides important guidance for States. The Network, likewise, supports the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises and the efforts by individual agencies to develop policies and measures to enhance accountability on this issue. We applaud the efforts of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop a strategy to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation by United Nations peacekeepers.

Members of the Network have noted with interest the discussions that have taken place within the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on gender-based violence and conduct of peacekeepers. We call on all troop-contributing countries to ensure that their peacekeepers uphold the highest standard of conduct in their deployment, and to ensure that appropriate disciplinary measures are put in place and utilized when peacekeepers fail to live up to those standards. A decisive and engaged policy of zero tolerance with regard to gender-based violence is crucial.

The international community recognizes that gender experts and expertise need to be included in all aspects of peace operations, including technical surveys and the design concepts of their operation, training, staffing, and programmes; in the absence of such expertise and senior management support, our

efforts to effectively address gender-based violence are significantly hindered. For strategies to be effective, they should build on expertise held by the female civilian population. As the Secretary-General has noted, we need to recognize the extent of the violations of women's and girls' human rights during armed conflict and ensure that planning and implementation of all peace support operations factor in the need to respond to sexual and gender-based violence, including through more effective physical protection, monitoring and reporting.

In this regard, we urge the Security Council to be vigilant and to more systematically condemn widespread instances of sexual and gender-based violence in specific conflicts. It must also be prepared to respond to such violence through the design of peace support mandates and by ensuring that a gender perspective is incorporated across the work of United Nations country teams. We would also encourage the Council to ensure that its missions to the field include an assessment of sexual and gender-based violence in their terms of reference, where appropriate, and that they meet with local women's groups and networks to get their perspective. The effectiveness of camps, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration installations and related infrastructure depend, to a large extent, on a physical design that reflects the fact that women take part in modern-day conflicts, also in the role of combatants.

In conclusion, members of the Network strongly urge the Security Council to give full consideration to the report of the Secretary-General and to the implementation of the recommendations contained therein. We would particularly like to highlight and support the Secretary-General's intentions to develop comprehensive strategies and action plans to implement various elements of resolution 1325 (2000).

We thank you, Mr. President, for today's debate, which affords us the opportunity to measure our actions and those of the Council with regard to implementing resolution 1325 (2000) in order to eliminate gender-based violence. This is our time to re-commit ourselves vigorously to the tenets of resolution 1325 (2000) and to produce tangible results.

The President: I would like, if I may, just to interject three procedural points into the debate at this stage. First, we will go on a little bit beyond 1 p.m. Secondly, I have 31 speakers still inscribed. I did say at the beginning that I hope people will stick to five minutes. The more people can do that, the more likely we are to get through the entire list efficiently. Again, if I could remind Council members that we will begin at 3 p.m. with a vote and, perhaps, a reading of a Presidential Statement or two, if they are ready. But this debate will start as soon as possible after that, and I would hope certainly no later than 3.15 p.m.

I now call on the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. van den Berg (Netherlands): I speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The Candidate Countries Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Croatia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

We are here to discuss the plight and the might of women in conflict. Four years ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000), which dealt, for the first time and in a comprehensive manner, with issues relating to women, peace and security. We all know that the resolution has had a tremendous impact outside the United Nations. The Secretary-General's report that is before us today (S/2004/814) concludes that the resolution has been effectively utilized by civil society organizations as an advocacy and monitoring tool. And indeed, this landmark resolution has created quite a constituency. Many non-governmental organizations, not in the least women's organizations, worldwide, have adopted resolution 1325 (2000) as their own.

The shadow report on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), presented by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, reflects this commitment.

But, how much of an impact has resolution 1325 (2000) had inside this building? Have the United Nations system and the United Nations Member States been equally enthused? I quote from the Secretary-General's report: "Despite significant achievements, major gaps and challenges remain in all areas".

Women's participation in conflict prevention and peace processes doesn't seem to be taking off. Integration of a gender perspective in peace

agreements must still be improved. And the representation of women in decision-making positions remains the exception rather than the rule.

Why? Why do we, in this day and age, still have to call specific attention to the fact that the world's population is made up of women as much as of men? Why does it not come naturally to us to take gender concerns to heart? When we look at our own Organization here, out of 191 Member States, there are only 11 female Permanent Representatives. Twenty-two of my colleagues from the European Union, about 25 countries, are not women — they are men. Does this explain why only a few Security Council resolutions pay attention to gender concerns? Is it lack of understanding? Is it lack of political will? I believe it might be both, and I believe that resolution 1325 (2000) teaches us an important lesson in this respect.

Undoubtedly, awareness of the importance of adopting a gender perspective in peacekeeping has increased significantly following the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Our understanding of the subject has grown. Training at all levels — ranging from troop contributors to members of the Security Council — has contributed to that cause. Recently the Department of Peacekeeping Operations issued a gender resources package, which is an impressive piece of work and for which we would like to commend Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno.

Most peacekeeping missions have appointed gender advisers, and 10 out of 17 missions now have such a full-time position. That is all valuable progress. However, unless we demand accountability at the same time, such efforts will not bear maximum fruit. In our career paths, gender has never been a critical success factor. Therefore, it is important to build on the foundation that 1325 (2000) has laid.

In his report, the Secretary-General expresses his intention to develop a comprehensive, systemwide strategy and action plan, with particular emphasis on monitoring and reporting mechanisms. The European Union expresses its hope that such a systemwide approach, which encompasses all United Nations bodies and includes clear time frames, will lead to accountability. Resolution 1325 (2000) is not a resolution that can be dealt with separately, once a year. Each report presented to the Council and each resolution adopted by the Council should contain a gender perspective. In fact, it is essential that a gender perspective be incorporated from the earliest stages on, both at Headquarters and at the field level, including in the planning of new operations.

Finally, commitments made must be met by adequate resources. Performance indicators, in this respect, are invaluable. We call on the Security Council to consider how best to keep track of its own record in integrating resolution 1325 (2000) into its daily work, including through the possible designation of a focal point for monitoring implementation.

On the issue of gender-based violence, we listened carefully to the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Louise Arbour, when she stated that violence against women was a particularly grave human rights violation. Many women and girls bear witness to the fact that in conflict situations, civilized behaviour may cease. Violence against women, including rape and sexual slavery, is often used as a weapon of war in order to dehumanize women themselves or the community they belong to. We have seen recent examples of such horrendous acts in Darfur, in the Sudan. We know of similar appalling acts of violence against women and girls in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Myanmar, we see patterns of systematic violations of the human rights of women, including sexual violence, by the regime's armed forces. The European Union condemns such practices in the strongest terms. Under all circumstances, States must take all necessary measures to prevent violence, protect women and girls from violence, and promote the full enjoyment of their human rights.

Impunity should be a dead-end street. The European Union welcomes the fact that provisions sanctioning systematic and large-scale sexual and gender-based violence have been incorporated in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The European Union wholeheartedly agrees with the Secretary-General that international and national courts should have adequate resources, access to gender expertise, gender training for all staff, gender-sensitive programmes for victims and witness protection in order to more effectively prosecute those responsible for such crimes. A recent conference on gender justice organized by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Legal Assistance Consortium provided compelling evidence for this.

Finally, the United Nations system, as well as troop-contributing countries, should obviously be part of the solution, not the problem. Under no circumstances can gender-based violence be condoned in peacekeeping or in other United Nations-led operations. International missions should not contribute to the existence or spread of sexual exploitation. The development and follow-up of codes of conduct are important. We note in this regard the Secretary-General's Bulletin on protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. The European Union insists on a zero-tolerance response, by which it means the prosecution and punishment of perpetrators. We welcome the strong action taken by the United Nations humanitarian organizations when violations have occurred in recent years.

There is only one long-term solution to gender-based violence: gender equality. As we look forward to the discussions to be held at the 2005 comprehensive review of all the commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration, including peace and security and development, we should keep this firmly in mind. As we commemorate today the fourth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we also take note of the fact that exactly 25 years have passed since the 1979 adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). As stated in the preamble of the CEDAW Convention, the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields. Resolution 1325 (2000) reminds us daily of our solemn obligation to achieve gender equality.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Australia, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): Mr. President, I wish to thank you for having convened this meeting. I wish also to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, High Commissioner Louise Arbour and Executive Director Thoraya Obaid for their presentations. I should like to say to Ms. Arbour that Australia is delighted to have her here in New York, and delighted with her appointment. It is wonderful to have a strong and able High Commissioner in place.

We are proud to reaffirm our commitment to resolution 1325 (2000), which remains a landmark document both for the Council in its recognition of the true dimensions of peace-building and for its international recognition of the particular burden women and girls bear as a result of conflict.

In Australia, community organizations have held public seminars to make the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) widely known. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has been given Government funding for a web site which provides comprehensive information on resolution 1325 (2000). Through our aid programme, we have provided training on the resolution to the Australian Defence Force and to military personnel from the Asia-Pacific region.

Australia has prepared an issues paper that outlines the latest research and best practice on women's roles in peacekeeping in Asia and the Pacific. From our research, we are developing practical aid policy guidelines which will encourage the role of women in peace-building projects.

In recognition of the responsibilities which individual States have, we are incorporating the concepts of resolution 1325 (2000) into our development cooperation programmes. In the Philippines, we are funding the implementation of a national survey on the participation of women in peace, governance and development. That survey will be a milestone in highlighting the concerns of women in the areas of peace, governance and development. We are also funding a conference bringing together women from Mindanao, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Afghanistan and Solomon Islands to develop awareness of the role of women in post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The international community more generally has made some progress, too, in pursuit of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, for example, is the first treaty to recognize certain acts of sexual and gender violence as among the most serious crimes under international law.

So, many positive steps have been taken nationally and internationally to implement the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000), but, as we have said at previous meetings, much more needs to be done. We must make sure that women participate effectively at all levels of peace operations and processes. Equally important, we must ensure that men receive training in understanding women's rights and the role of women in peace-building.

It is crucial that we consider gender dimensions of conflict as being integral to the achievement of sustainable and lasting peace. Only then will we achieve a balanced perspective and arrive at balanced solutions. Resolution 1325 (2000) provides the guidance to do this.

We must ensure that the basic principles of conflict prevention, the participation of women in peace and security and the specific protection needs of women are incorporated into the work of the Council, other agencies of the United Nations, the international community more generally and individual Member States. Australia is committed to playing its part in this respect.

The President: I now give the floor to the Under-Secretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights of Mexico.

Ms. Olamendi (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): In this forum many initiatives have been negotiated to promote international peace and to preserve human dignity. In the Council Chamber revolutionary resolutions have also been adopted on crucial issues such as the promotion of disarmament, the protection of civilians in armed conflict and the promotion of democracy. Many countries have overcome war and hunger thanks to efforts made in this Chamber.

Today, we are meeting to mark the fourth anniversary of the adoption of the Council's resolution 1325 (2000), which was the result of the determination of members to tackle the troubling issue of violence against women in armed conflicts, as well as the marginalization of women in decision-making processes relating both to prevention and to reconstruction. Unfortunately, despite that determination, there have been many obstacles to implementing resolution 1325 (2000), and today we are confronting the sad fact that progress in carrying out the actions set out in that important initiative remains very limited.

In that connection, my country would like explicitly to acknowledge all the actors in the international community that are committed to this issue, particularly the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) for its significant work in mainstreaming a gender perspective into its daily work. Without a doubt, the most tangible results in achieving the objectives of the resolution have been obtained in that sphere.

Similarly, we cannot fail to congratulate the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for all its work through these years to promote and realize the precepts contained in the resolution. UNIFEM's work in all corners of the world is admirable and provides a role model. The recent Conference on Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Situations, held from 15 to 17 September 2004, whose report identifies the major obstacles remaining to the inclusion of women in the process of reconstruction, thereby guaranteeing lasting peace, is only one example of UNIFEM's important work.

As can be noted, the tools and work plan are at hand. Unfortunately, we cannot achieve our objectives if we continue to work in an isolated and fragmented fashion. We urgently need an integrated and coordinated strategy and we must begin to forge it here, within this Organization.

It is of paramount importance that the gender perspective permeate each and every body in our Organization. The content of resolution 1325 (2000) must be ingrained in the daily work of the Main Committees of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat. Our strategy must include internal reform, reflected in greater inclusion of women in key United Nations posts, such as special representatives of the Secretary-General. The reform must also be outward-looking, with the systematic inclusion of the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) in the resolutions adopted by the various bodies of the United Nations and ongoing coordination with regional organizations, Governments and civil society, with a view to ensuring that those principles are recognized even in the world's most marginalized communities.

Another crucial issue is the need for follow-up machinery to monitor international and national progress — or backsliding — in implementation of the resolution. Adopting the right decisions is not enough; they must be implemented.

Women are increasingly a target of war, both because of their civilian status and for the humiliation that victims are made to feel because of the attitudes of the societies in which they live. That situation can be tolerated no longer.

We would like to reiterate that true accountability cannot exist without the formulation and strict implementation of laws that provide for punishments

commensurate with the crimes committed. In that connection, we welcome the fact that gender-based violence has been recognized as a crime against humanity in international law. The challenge we now face is to reflect that status in our national legislation.

We are strongly committed to securing the objectives set forth in resolution 1325 (2000) in all of their aspects, and we will continue to work actively to that end, as we have in the past. However, we believe that full implementation does not reside solely in the formulation of laws and mechanisms, but will also require a change in our mindset. Many continue to believe that women are not valid interlocutors; that is clearly reflected in women's very limited participation in conflict prevention and peace processes. That is why the education and training of women, men and children is indispensable. While that is a long-term project, there can be no doubt that it will produce sound results. We should emphasize that the effort must be coordinated, and we appeal to the international community to strengthen the work of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women in that connection.

Next year will provide another opportunity for us to revitalize our work to promote women's rights. The debate on possible reform of the Organization and the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women provide platforms for demonstrating our political will to take concrete action. We hope that this debate will not remain mere lip service and that we take specific decisions today to arrive at our destination.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): We would like to express our thanks to you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on women and peace and security, an issue of great importance on the agenda of the international community. We listened with great interest to the statements made earlier by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Ms. Thoraya Obaid and Ms. Louise Arbour, each of whom addressed a different aspect of the issue under consideration. The Security Council's interest in the issue of women and armed conflict contributes to the activities of the entire United Nations system in this area. It has furthered the strengthening, promotion and integration of existing General Assembly and Economic and Social Council mechanisms relating to the protection of women in armed conflict, to strengthening measures to empower women and to promoting their equal participation in peacekeeping operations and important decision-making in the post-conflict reconstruction of States and societies. In this context, we hail the important accomplishments that have been achieved in implementing the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000), as noted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2004/814), which my delegation has read very carefully.

The shameful and terrible situation of the millions of victims of sexual violence makes it important to give immediate attention to this matter, which presents a long-term challenge to us all. Action is required at all levels: within societies that suffer from such practices by all United Nations bodies and by the international donor community. With regret, we must point out that no concrete progress has been made in protecting women and girls in armed conflict from all forms of violence, including human trafficking, rape, murder and other violations of women's rights.

In our view, strong international pressure should be applied to those parties to armed conflict which do not respect the relevant provisions of international law and international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. In this connection, we believe that the Secretary-General's recommendations constitute an encouraging starting point for preventing violence against women in armed conflict and for facing up to that phenomenon.

Here we must also recall that the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) include addressing not only the situation of women in armed conflict, but also, clearly, that of women under occupation. There is no doubt that the international community is aware of the tragic situation of Syrian and Palestinian women and girls under Israeli occupation.

In Syria, women play a role in all decision-making processes in the political, economic, social, cultural, health, education, labour and development spheres. Syrian women occupy high positions and participate in the electoral process both by voting and by running for office in all legislative municipal, local, labour union and occupational councils. The scope of this involvement prevents any violations of women's rights.

Because of the importance of the issue of women in armed conflict, a symposium was held in Beirut,

Lebanon, a few months ago, on Arab women in armed conflict, with the participation of women's delegations, experts on women's issues, civil society organizations from all Arab countries and high-level delegations from Syria and other Arab countries. The symposium made recommendations that should be taken into consideration.

Resolution 1325 (2000) provides a solid political framework for dealing with gender-based violence in armed conflict and in peace-building situations. The challenge that we face, however, is that of transforming that political framework into political will and concrete action.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Sen (India): We are pleased to see the United Kingdom presiding over this meeting of the Security Council.

In an earlier intervention on women and peace and security, we advised that the Council, in its examination of the issue, remain within the area of its mandate, namely the impact of conflict on women and the Council's role in its resolution. While we have been participating in the debates of the Council on this item, we continue to maintain that thematic issues with a cross-cutting, multisectoral dimension requiring the active consideration of all Member States are best discussed in a universal forum such as the General Assembly.

The report of the Secretary-General under consideration (S/2004/814) provides a comprehensive review of the progress achieved over the past four years in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The report shows that the initiative has led to some success in areas such as gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations and training of peacekeepers on gender perspectives.

My country has been happy to contribute to this process. As one of the larger troop contributors to the United Nations, India has been conscious of the need to incorporate the essential elements of such a policy in the pre-deployment training that all its peacekeepers undergo before proceeding to mission areas. In response to the Secretary-General's concern about the low representation of women in peacekeeping operations, expressed in his report on implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/58/694), India has decided to deploy two women military observers to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Secretary-General has pointed out in the report that is before the Council today, however, that the protection and promotion of the human rights of women and girls in armed conflict continues to pose a pressing challenge. The real test of the adequacy of these efforts is undoubtedly their impact on the ground. The post-cold war era has been characterized by increasing intra-State conflicts, terrorist attacks, ethnic cleansing and egregious violations of human rights. All of these have an impact on the vulnerable sections of society, mainly women and children. The international community needs to mobilize itself to address these situations. We share the principles and objectives of the report. Our comments, therefore, are on certain matters of nuance and detail.

In our experience, some of the solutions offered by the Secretary-General, in particular the greater participation of women in areas of conflict prevention, peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction, are germane to the issue. Some solutions would need to emerge from the conflict-ridden societies themselves. Others are more long-term and structural. They involve, inter alia, the encouragement of democratic ideals and practices, freedom of speech and expression, effecting improvements in economic and social conditions and the expansion of opportunities for education and productive employment.

It was not for nothing that the poet Nekrasov, writing of the horrors of war, said that the most sacred tears are those of mothers. Mothers' organizations have in several cases moderated conflict, and their strength and energy need to be specifically harnessed. In his report, the Secretary-General has reflected upon several salient issues with regard to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). He recognizes the need to prioritize the proactive role women can play in peace-building and the need to enhance women's participation at the peace table. We are in full agreement with the Secretary-General's observation that, without the inclusive participation of women, peace-building cannot be comprehensive.

We appreciate the Secretary-General's identification of some key challenges in this regard, including the need to increase the number of women in

high-level decision-making positions in peacekeeping operations, peace negotiations and similar activities. Addressing the issue of women's full participation in peace negotiations and peace-building is undoubtedly essential. However, attempts to artificially enhance the number of women in peace negotiations — especially in conflicts in male-dominated societies — cannot necessarily guarantee enduring results. Equal participation has to be a local initiative, and any external attempt at influencing the situation, though necessary, has to be incremental for it to have a truly lasting effect.

We agree with the Secretary-General's view that it is important for the United Nations and its agencies to achieve a higher level of representation of women, quantitatively and at senior levels. It may also be useful for the Secretary-General to consider making adequate provision of resources for training women from developing countries, in order to give this meaning. While making provision for regular budgetary resources specifically allocated for both gender mainstreaming and initiatives targeted at women and girls, the need for specific resource allocation for such training should be kept in mind.

Similarly, the question of bringing perpetrators of violence to justice merits careful consideration. We agree with the Secretary-General that the international community should send stronger signals to parties involved in conflicts that gender-based violence will be investigated and that perpetrators will be prosecuted. There should be zero tolerance for gender-based violence.

However, external attempts at imposing justice may sometimes lead to further strife, as we have heard repeatedly from countries that have emerged from conflict and are in the process of establishing rule-based systems. The international community, therefore, needs to enhance cooperation for capacity-building in the areas of justice and the rule of law and in strengthening national justice systems to ensure that perpetrators of violence are brought to justice.

Like the Secretary-General, we are convinced that sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are totally unacceptable forms of behaviour. We condemn such behaviour, whether by peacekeeping personnel or by humanitarian personnel, and we believe that necessary measures providing protection against such exploitation and abuse must be undertaken. However, in that respect, sometimes we feel it is not that the Secretary-General's support goes too far, but rather that it perhaps does not go far enough, and that even more stringent regulations, going beyond the Secretary-General's bulletin, are necessary in dealing with such cases. In that context, we are cognizant of the fact that many Member States have regulations more far-reaching than those contained in the bulletin and that powerful, committed and results-oriented women's organizations in many countries have achieved significant results.

The Secretary-General has urged Member States and entities of the United Nations to establish a coordinated humanitarian-response-monitoring system with specific indicators to determine attention to gender perspectives at the field level. He has also expressed his intention to set indicators and benchmarks for equal participation by women in all aspects of election processes, based on a review of good practice. The development of indicators, benchmarks and guidelines is a sensitive and serious issue that should involve a process of broader intergovernmental scrutiny and approval before their eventual adoption.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Mabhongo (South Africa): It is an honour for my delegation to participate in today's open debate on the fourth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. We associate ourselves with the statement made by Canada on behalf of the Human Security Network.

In today's conflicts, it is civilians — women and children — who bear the brunt of gross abuses of human rights. That notwithstanding, the time has come for the international community not only to recognize women as victims in conflicts, but also to take note of the important role they play as key players in peace processes. The point was made during the Conference on Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Situations — held by the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Legal Assistance Consortium in September 2004 — that we must strive to integrate women's concerns more effectively into peace processes worldwide and achieve full, equal and effective participation by women in those processes.

Given the central role that women play in the social, political and economic development of our societies, we believe that it is logical and morally right that the full realization of equal political and economic rights for women must be treated as an essential component of our collective approach to preventing and resolving conflicts. In most cases, women do not have access to resources, political rights, authority or control over their environment. We therefore support the Secretary-General's recommendation that resources put into post-conflict phases should also cover programmes aimed at women's empowerment. Our own experience in South Africa has taught us that, given a chance, women can bring an important and much-needed perspective to all stages of peace processes and peace-building.

My delegation believes that resolution 1325 (2000) remains a landmark document in the history of the United Nations. The resolution calls for special measures to protect women and girls from violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse. It also calls for the full inclusion of women in international peace and security processes. In addition, we believe that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provides us with the guidelines necessary to respond to women's needs in a comprehensive manner.

In the African context, we have realized that the exclusion of women from political and economic decision-making is a significant obstacle to the realization of sustainable peace. The African Union has thus taken steps and adopted legislative measures to address that problem. South Africa is also making its contribution to support those efforts. Recently in South Africa, we hosted a group of women from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi to share their experiences with South African women, who — despite the fact that they were the most vulnerable — managed to make their voices heard during our political transition. The success of the South African political transition is, in no small measure, a result of the pivotal role played by women.

A number of initiatives have been put in place by the international community to address the question of gender mainstreaming, but we believe that more work must still be done to ensure that all obstacles to women's equality are eliminated. My delegation believes that the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) requires the resolve of Member States. It is also crucial, in our view, that partnerships be formed with civil society to promote women's rights and participation in peace processes. Gender experts and expertise need to be included at all levels and in all aspects of peace operations.

Women are victims of unbelievable atrocities and injustices in conflict situations, and we need to put more effort into the monitoring and reporting of such atrocities. Those efforts must be complemented by practical measures to end impunity and to bring to justice those who are responsible for abhorrent crimes against women and girls. In that regard, we believe that States must adopt legislation incorporating human rights and humanitarian and international criminal law into their own legal systems.

My delegation is of the view that the establishment of the International Criminal Court has strengthened the international legal framework in addressing such crimes against women and that it holds the promise of meaningful accountability for gender-based crimes against women during armed conflict. However, for those measures to succeed, adequate resources, gender expertise and training for all staff and gender-sensitive programmes for victim and witness protection are required.

We must uphold the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000). Women's rights must be protected, and the obstacles to their equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace must be removed. We can uphold those objectives by eliminating all forms of gender-based violence during conflict and post-conflict situations. It is said that when women are safe, so are nations, and when women feel secure, peace is possible.

In conclusion, my delegation supports the report of the Secretary-General before the Council (S/2004/814), as well as all the initiatives undertaken by the entities of the United Nations system and Member States in implementing resolution 1325 (2000).

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): For Bangladesh, the subject of today's deliberations is of topical importance. We therefore thank the United Kingdom presidency for convening this meeting, as we thank

others — Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, High Commissioner Arbour and Executive Director Obaid — for their informed presentations.

Appreciation is owed to the Secretary-General for the document at hand (S/2004/814). It is true that entire communities suffer the consequences of armed conflict, but the worst sufferers are often women and girls. That information is derived from simple empirical observation.

Bangladesh's cultural matrix provides for high priority with regard to women's issues. That tradition has pervaded most of our contemporary history. It has now found fruition in many innovative ideas that help to empower women. Two examples are microcredit and non-formal education. We have learned that gender mainstreaming helps to marginalize extremist thought and action. It encourages a societal behavioural pattern that is more value-laden than violent. That is perhaps one explanation as to why there have been no incidents connected to international terrorism in Bangladesh.

We have incorporated that value into our foreign policy as a principle. We are always pleased to share our experiences with others. That is why Bangladesh was so closely associated with the development and adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000). It was the Bangladesh presidency that issued a statement on women and peace, for the first time in the Council, on International Women's Day in March 2000. That statement contained a simple thesis. It was that women's participation is an ingredient essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

We believe that resolution 1325 (2000) is a vital resolution that has set critical norms. We see that as a landmark event. It is heartening that the resolution provides for the integration of gender perspectives into United Nations programmes related to peace.

Acting in partnership with the United Kingdom delegation, Bangladesh sponsored a resolution in the Commission on the Status of Women on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system. While it is true that Bangladesh and the United Kingdom have many things in common, in terms of development their levels are very different. Yet we collaborated on that issue in order to make the point that gender mainstreaming is a universal value and that it is as much a concern of the developing countries as it is of the developed. Our actions flowed from that belief.

Bangladesh believes that it is, indeed, quite evident in our society that our investment in women has contributed enormously to the creation of standards of pluralism, democracy and human rights. These ideals are essential components of sustainable peace. Our peacekeepers — and we are consistently one of the largest contributors — carry those ideals with them in conflict-ridden places and distant parts. Our main reward lies in the universal appreciation of this global service.

Significant developments have been achieved at the United Nations with regard to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Much remains to be done, however. We need to develop guidelines to ensure that all peace-related activities include and support the rule of law and promote gender equality, thus protecting women's human rights.

Systematic use of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in post-conflict countries as a guiding framework would be desirable.

The promotion and protection of the human rights of women and of girls in armed conflict throughout the world is a pressing challenge. Their situation — particularly that of those under foreign occupation, such as in the occupied Palestinian territories and the Syrian Golan — remains a matter of grave concern for us.

There is need for a sustained commitment at all times to gender justice and women's empowerment. There must be zero tolerance for crimes against women and girls in conflict situations. Impunity must be ended and the perpetrators of crimes brought to justice.

We must uphold the promises we made in resolution 1325 (2000). Consistent and concerted action, buttressed by genuine political will, is required if we are to realize the goals that have been set. Our aims can thus be achieved through partnerships across the broadest possible spectrum, including with non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors. Thus we could and should move forward from rhetoric to action and from advocacy to implementation.

The meeting was suspended at 1.35 p.m.